

Europe sends Swedish expert to advise PNA

RAMALLAH (AP) — Under heavy pressure to do more to fight terrorism, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) is getting some help from the European Union (EU). Nils Eriksson of Sweden, an expert in anti-terror tactics, will assist Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in "continuing the effort against terrorism," Miguel Moratinos, the EU's Mideast envoy, said Monday after meeting with Mr. Arafat. EU officials said Mr. Eriksson will train Palestinian security forces in search and interview techniques, and help set up a technical investigation bureau with forensic capabilities. He will also help train management in police and security agencies, the EU said. Mr. Moratinos said Mr. Eriksson was being sent as part of the European effort to get the peace process back on track and to "assist and support the American effort." Mr. Eriksson was to arrive in the region Monday night.

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Russia offers Syria upgrade of tanks, APCs

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia offered Syria an upgrade Tuesday of its ageing Soviet-era tanks and armoured personnel carriers, saying this would be more cost-effective for Damascus than buying new weapons. ITAR-TASS quoted Vladimir Pakhomov, deputy minister for external economic ties, as saying Syria's T-55 tanks could be upgraded into the more modern T-72 model for several hundred thousand dollars, whereas a new one would cost \$2 million. The BMP-2 APCs could also be upgraded, Mr. Pakhomov said. "This would bring a real saving of several billion dollars, given the amount of weaponry they have there now," he said.

Israeli troops beat Palestinian labourer

BETHLEHEM (AFP) — A Palestinian labourer found unconscious and badly injured in a forest near Bethlehem Tuesday told relatives he had been beaten by Israeli troops for trying to enter Israel illegally. Ahmad Hussein Daoud, 20, was taken from Bethlehem to a Hebron hospital where doctors said he bore deep wounds on his face and was bruised over most of his body. Mr. Daoud told doctors he had been picked up by the soldiers near Rachel's Tomb, a Jewish and Muslim holy site still under the control of the Israeli army on the edge of PNA-run Bethlehem. Mr. Daoud said he and a friend were taken by the soldiers to a nearby orchard and beaten until he fell unconscious. The whereabouts of the second man were not immediately known.

140 Palestinians imprisoned without trial since bombing

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel has jailed 140 Palestinians without trial since the double suicide bombing in Jerusalem on July 30 which killed 16 people, the army said Tuesday. An army spokesman would not say for how long the suspects were ordered held, but the Haaretz newspaper quoted military sources as saying the terms were between one and two months, renewable. Since the Jerusalem bombing, the Israeli army has detained nearly 250 West Bank Palestinians, mostly suspected members of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Islamic Jihad. Haaretz said that with the latest convictions, Israel had never held so many Palestinians in administrative detention at one time.

8 arrested while attempting to enter illegally

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwaiti security forces have arrested eight Iranians and an Iraqi who tried to enter the country illegally, the interior ministry said Tuesday. It said another Iranian managed to escape, without giving details on how or when the nine were caught. A total of 92 foreigners were arrested last month trying to sneak into Kuwait, the ministry said. Last week, the coast guard arrested 24 Iranians. Kuwait does not have a fixed maritime border with Iran and often intercepts Iranians on small boats. It has built a sand wall on the border of Iraq, which occupied the Gulf emirate between August 1990 and February 1991.

Bomb explosion in northern Israel 'criminal not terrorist'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A bomb explosion that caused no casualties in the northern Israeli city of Afula was of criminal and not terrorist origin, Israeli police announced Tuesday. The minor explosion occurred Monday night near a military club, the Soldier's House, in a public park. "After tests carried out on the explosives, the police established categorically that the blast was not of terrorist origin," police spokeswoman Linda Menuchin said.



Thousands of citizens take to the streets to receive His Majesty King Hussein upon his arrival in Ma'an Tuesday (Photo by Yousef 'Allan)

King urges Islamists to participate in elections, nation to come out and vote

MA'AN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein has urged Jordan's Islamist groups who have declared their intention to boycott the 1997 elections to reconsider their stand, stressing that their contribution to the democratic process is needed to safeguard national interests. Addressing a public rally in Ma'an yesterday, King Hussein said "the door for dialogue is open and has never been slammed in the face of any one, particularly the Islamist groups which developed and thrived in the care of the late King Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein, the founder of the Kingdom, who provided them with care and protection. We hope they [the Islamist groups] will contribute along with the rest of the Jordanian society to the construction process in this country, through their participation in the coming parliamentary elections."

"Only through dialogue and debate can we reach solutions because we seek the best solution for any problem and we believe that dialogue and persuasion is part of our faith and religion," the King stressed. King Hussein, who was accompanied on the visit by Their Royal Highnesses Princess Hanzeh and Hashem, told the rally that "in this country we have met for a debate and decided to respect and uphold the constitution and also to agree or disagree within the framework of the National Charter which encompasses all political shades in the Kingdom."

"We are enjoying great happiness over the restoration of parliamentary life in our country, something of which we have been deprived for some time in the past, and we have now decided to march along the road, and as to the dialogue over a crisis, I can say there is no crisis and no reasons for crisis but the door for dialogue will remain open, because as Muslims or Christians, we together form a united Jordanian family," the King stressed. As to the Islamist groups he said, "they have had honourable stands which we can never deny or forget and we hope they will participate in the coming elections and elect their representatives in Parliament so that they can offer further contributions to the country."

King Hussein said that he gave his directives to the Minister of Interior "to start a dialogue with the opposition parties within a fixed timetable so that the public will learn about these parties and their members, whether they conform to the country's laws including the Political Parties Law and we hope to find out that they belong and have allegiance to this country."

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U.S. envoy criticises economic punishment of West Bank, Gaza Israel allows Gazan vegetables into Israel

RAMALLAH (AP) — U.S. Mideast envoy Dennis Ross urged Israel Tuesday to lift some of the travel bans and economic punishments imposed on Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Rising Palestinian anger over Israel's tough measures erupted in protests in which a U.S. flag and an effigy of Mr. Ross were burned in the West Bank town of Nablus. A group of Hamas supporters among the 5,000 marchers chanted "give us car bombs" while members of Mr. Arafat's Fatah faction paraded with AK-47 Kalashnikov assault rifles. After a meeting with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, Mr. Ross told reporters shortly after midnight that "measures that don't relate clearly to security are measures that are not helpful and are counter-productive."



U.S. special envoy Dennis Ross (left) looks over at Palestinian President Yasser Arafat as they sit down to talk Tuesday in Ramallah. Mr. Ross had just met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in his current bid to ease tensions in the Middle East peace process (Reuters photo)

allow exports to Israel. Three trucks with eggplants and tomatoes crossed after the gate was opened early today. Israel banned Palestinians or commerce from entering the country after a July 30

double suicide bombing claimed 16 lives in an open-air Jerusalem market. A ban on travel between some Palestinian towns in the West Bank is still in force, and Israel has refused to transfer millions of dol-

lars in tax revenues to the Palestinians. Atef Alawneh, Palestinian deputy finance minister, told reporters that the cutoff in taxes collected from

(Continued on page 7)

Hamas says military wing responsible for Jerusalem double suicide bombing

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The political wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, Tuesday denied any role in the July 30 double suicide bombing in Jerusalem, but declared that the Izzedin Qassam Brigades, its military wing, was responsible for the attacks. "Yes, Izzedin Qassam is totally responsible (for the operation) and it is a separate wing which is fully responsible for its deeds. It is the only party which speaks for its actions," Ibrahim Goshieh said stressing that the two wings of the Islamist group are separate in duties. Mr. Goshieh told the Jordan Times that the statements issued after the Jerusalem blast "were issued by the Izzedin Qassam. They were not from Hamas."

"The Hamas movement does not comment, neither support or deny the (military) operations. This is a matter which concerns only Izzedin Qassam," Mr. Goshieh said. Israel and the PNA have cast doubts whether the statements issued were genuine. Mr. Goshieh is the first Hamas official to confirm that these statements were genuine and issued by Izzedin Qassam. Hamas was established in 1987 to fight against Israel's occupation of Palestine, but the Izzedin Brigades were formed in 1992. Following the two blasts, the Izzedin Qassam Brigades claimed responsibility for the attacks in a statement that was faxed to Israel Channel 2 and some other foreign news agencies in Tel Aviv. "The political wing of the group has nothing to do with the masterminding, the time or the plan and the announcement," of the attacks, he added. "I want to emphasise that there is a total separation between Izzedin Qassam, which is only concerned with the military aspect, and Hamas, which concentrates on the political field," Mr.



Ibrahim Goshieh

Goshieh noted. Mr. Goshieh said that there was no change introduced to the political "programme" of his group adding that "resistance of the occupation with all possible means" is still the core of its programme, "which starts with... throwing stones... and ends with suicide operations which Izzedin Qassam is undertaking now." Mr. Goshieh reiterated his group's stand against the

(Continued on page 7)

Iraq accuses U.S. of blocking import of French ambulances

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Sanctions-hit Iraq accused the U.S. Tuesday of blocking a contract to import 100 ambulances from France under the U.N. oil-for-food accord.

The U.S. stand within the U.N. Sanctions Committee was that "these ambulances are not necessary," Iraq News Agency (INA) reported from New York, without giving the value of the deal or naming the French company.

Under the oil-for-food deal which was launched in December, Iraq resumed limited exports of crude to finance imports of food, medicine and humanitarian supplies for its population of more than 20 million. But Iraq has accused the U.S. of working within the sanctions committee to block and delay most of its contracts for humanitarian imports from foreign suppliers.

Lebanese army reinforces position to curb possible civil disobedience

BAALBEK (AFP) — The Lebanese army reinforced positions Tuesday in parts of the Syrian-controlled eastern Bekaa Valley in a bid to curb calls for civil disobedience by the radical wing of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah.

A 200-strong force, backed by nine armoured vehicles, deployed at 11:00 a.m. along a road west of Baalbek, a Hizbollah stronghold, without entering the city itself or nearby villages. No such measures were, however, carried out in Beirut's southern suburbs, also a predominantly Shiite Muslim area where Hizbollah has a strong presence. The reinforcements came a day after general prosecutor Adnan Addum ordered

investigations and measures against anybody who calls for civil disobedience and anyone who answers such calls. Sheikh Subhi Tofaili, former Hizbollah secretary general, launched from Baalbek on July 4 the "revolution of the hungry," asking the poor to stop paying taxes and electricity, water and telephone bills. Tofaili was protesting the "corruption and nepotism" of the state against the poor who are suffering from the high cost of living and public taxes. He said that government development projects did not grant a fair share to the "deprived" regions of Shiite-dominated southern and eastern Lebanon. Both regions have long

Iranian president submits relatively moderate cabinet

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's new President Mohammad Khatami unveiled his cabinet Tuesday naming a new oil minister and replacing long-time Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati with the current ambassador to the United Nations. The choices represented a compromise between the left- and right-wing factions in Iran's ruling Islamist clergy but included a number of relatively young and moderate technocrats close to the new

president. Contrary to expectations, no women were included in the list of 22 ministers that Khatami, who swept to victory on a platform of social and economic change, submitted to the conservative-dominated parliament for approval. U.N. envoy Kamal Kharazi, 53, a former director of the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), was named to replace Mr. Velayati, who served as foreign minister

for 16 years and was influential in shaping Iran's hardline stance toward the West. Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, energy minister in the outgoing government of former President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, was named to the key portfolio of oil minister replacing Gholam Reza Aghazadeh. A graduate in civil engineering from Tehran University, Mr. Zanganeh was

(Continued on page 7)

Israeli-Arab MKs meet Syrian FM in Damascus

DAMASCUS (AFP) — A delegation of Israeli-Arabs, some of them MKs, held political talks with Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Sharaa here until early Tuesday in the first meeting of its type since Israel's creation in 1948.

The talks followed a dinner in honour of the 50-member delegation which arrived in Syria last week in response to an invitation from President Hafez Assad.

A delegation official said Mr. Sharaa seemed "cautiously optimistic" on the future of the Middle East peace process because of "positive indications" such as Arab solidarity and international criticism of Israel's policies.

The Syrian minister was "harshly" critical of Washington's policy toward the region, saying U.S. envoy Dennis Ross mission "will be without results," the source said.

Mr. Ross, who arrived in Israel over the weekend, has been holding a flurry of meetings with Israelis and Palestinians.

Opposition Labour MK Nawaf Massalha said Mr. Sharaa said Damascus

"is ready to make any sacrifice to recover its land," the Golan Heights, which Israel captured in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed in 1981.

Mr. Massalha reported that Mr. Sharaa said that it "would be preferable to obtain it without spilling a drop of blood."

Deputy Abdul Malek Dahamshah, an Islamist allied with the Arab Democratic Party (ADP), said Mr. Sharaa stressed "the importance of uniting the Israeli peace camp so as to counter [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu's policy."

The return of the Golan is Syria's key demand in negotiations while Mr. Netanyahu has said the future of the strategic plateau lies with Israel.

The Syrian minister "admitted that Syria has delayed welcoming Palestinians remaining in the country [Israel] and establishing ties with them," Mr. Dahamshah said.

He said the minister called for Israeli-Arabs "to unite within an influential parliamentary group" to strengthen the peace camp.

Mr. Sharaa's statements "boosted our trust in the Syrian policy favourable to peace," Mr. Dahamshah said, adding that the delegation asked Damascus "to make it easier to maintain contacts between Palestinians living in Syria and those with Israeli citizenship."

Labour deputy Saleh Tarif said his party's leader, Ehud Barak, confirmed ahead of the visit that "Labour leans toward resuming the negotiations with Damascus at the point where they were halted" in February 1996.

Labour, which has been in opposition since May 1996, said that the "peace will be one of retreats" by Israel from Arab territory occupied in 1967, Mr. Tarif said.

He did not say whether he brought a Labour Party message to Syrian leaders.

Mr. Tarif backed Damascus' version of the talks with Israel resulting at the beginning of 1996 in an agreement for Israel to withdraw from the Golan.

The agreement "should be signed in September," said Mr. Tarif, who heads the Israeli parliament's

internal affairs committee.

Mr. Sharaa's statements are "a message of peace," said Deputy Walid Sadeq of the far left Meretz Party, who told the minister of the desire of his party's chief, Yossi Sarid, to visit Syria. Ovadia Yosef, head of the ultra-Orthodox Shas Party, which is a member of the Israeli governing coalition, was also ready to respond to an invitation from Damascus, according to ADP Vice President Taleb Sanaa, who said he "is bringing back a message of peace to the Israeli people."

A meeting between the Israeli-Arab delegation and the Syrian president is expected to take place Tuesday, according to members of the group.

They are also to meet leaders of Palestinian organisations based in Damascus who oppose the 1993 Palestinian autonomy accords.

The delegation from Israel received a warm welcome Sunday at the Palestinian refugee camp at Yarmouk, south of Damascus.



IRAQI REFUGEES IN SYRIA: Iraqi refugees demonstrate in front of the U.N. High Commission for Refugees office in Damascus on Tuesday to protest against a cut in financial aid (Reuters photo)

Japanese Red Army members appeal Lebanon prison verdict

BEIRUT (AFP) — Five members of the Japanese Red Army sentenced to three years in prison for using forged documents and illegally residing in Lebanon appealed against their conviction Tuesday, court sources said.

Beshara Abu Saad, the defence attorney for the five members of the extremist group, appealed the conviction by the Beirut criminal court claiming that its verdict contained procedural errors and contradictions, the sources said.

The five ageing members of the Red Army, which carried out a string of terrorist attacks in the 1970s alongside radical Palestinian groups, were convicted on July 31.

The criminal court hailed one of the defendants, Koza Okamoto, for his "heroic action against the Israeli enemy," but ordered him and the others expelled from Lebanon once they complete their three-year prison sentences.

Mr. Okamoto, 49, is the sole survivor of a 1972 attack on Tel Aviv's Lod airport which left 26 people dead. He was sentenced to life in prison in Israel but was freed in a swap with Palestinian guerrillas in 1985.

Mr. Okamoto, Kazuo Tohira, 44, Haro Wako, 48, Masao Adachi, 57, and Mariko Yamamoto, 56, the lone woman defendant, were accused of forging documents, using false

passports and illegally entering and residing in Lebanon.

None of the defendants faced any charges connected to their acknowledged membership of the Japanese Red Army.

Japan has asked for the extradition of the Red Army members, but Tokyo and Beirut are not linked by an extradition treaty and it is up to the Lebanese cabinet to decide whether to hand over the five.

Red Army guerrillas are regarded by many Arabs as heroes of the war against Israel, and Syria, the main powerbroker in Lebanon, is said to have opposed their arrest and potential extradition to Japan.

The arrests also angered

many Lebanese and Palestinian leftist groups here, as well as intellectuals, deputies and even government ministers who rallied a defence team of more than 100 attorneys.

Political parties such as the Lebanese branch of Syria's ruling Baath Party and the Iranian-backed Hizbollah organisation have demanded their release and called on the government to grant their request for political asylum.

Lebanon has been trying to shed its wartime image as a haven for terror groups in an attempt to secure foreign investment in an \$18 billion rebuilding programme launched after the 1975-90 civil war.

Yemen says blasts part of 'destabilisation plot'

SANAA (AFP) — The bombings that occurred in the southern Yemeni city of Aden on July 28 are part of a "destabilisation plot" stirred up by opposition members abroad, a Yemeni security official said Monday.

"The Aden bombings are part of a criminal plot against security and stability, unmasked after the arrest of those involved," he told the weekly Al Mithaq, mouthpiece of the ruling General People's Congress.

The official, who was not identified, added that five suspects have confessed "to having been recruited by elements living abroad and to receiving funds to carry out" the dynamite attacks that targeted three petrol stations. The blasts caused no casualties.

The official identified the suspects as Wael Haddad, Wanis Atiq Ahmad Sacarib, Abdelilah Mussa, Mohammad Ibrahim, Mohammad Issa Mohammad Zubaidi and Rami Mohammad Said Hazzam.

They belong to "parties which had triggered the war and proclaimed the secession" of southern Yemen in 1994, he added.

Interior Minister Hussein Arab last week announced that the five suspects were brought to the general prosecutor's office.

Two opposition groups, the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) and the League of the Sons of Yemen (LSY) have reported the arrest of 71 of their members in the southern provinces after the blasts.

Opposition denies Iran arrested 'spies'

NICOSIA (AFP) — The People's Mujahadeen of Iran, the armed Iranian opposition movement, Monday denied Iran's announcement that it has arrested pro-Iraqi Iranian and Iraqi spies.

In a statement faxed to Agence France Presse, the group said, the "Iranian intelligence ministry disseminated falsehoods yesterday and today about the arrest of a joint team of Mujahadeen and Iraqis and the Mujahadeen's 'cooperation' with the 'secret services of Iraq'."

The group said Iran was trying to divert attention from recent blows against the government.

"Large numbers of Mujahadeen agents were killed or wounded in extensive clashes in recent weeks in

the provinces of Khuzistan [southwest], Ilam [West] and Kerman [South] between the Mujahadeen and the Pasdaran [revolutionary guards corps] and intelligence ministry agents," the statement said.

Some members of the Mujahadeen were arrested during the skirmishes, it added.

The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported Monday that the intelligence services arrested last week four spies — two Iraqis and two Iranians — who it said were linked to the Iraqi secret services.

IRNA said the four had illegally entered Iran and were collaborating with the Iraq-based Mujahadeen.

Sudanese MP reported killed in fighting

KHARTOUM (R) — A Sudanese member of parliament was killed in fighting between the government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), Sudanese state television has said.

It said in a report Monday that Ibrahim Mohammad Al Amin Ibrahim, a

Jezira state deputy in central Sudan, was "martyred in the operations areas in the south of the country."

It gave no further details.

It is not the first time a member of the national assembly, or parliament, has been killed in the 14-year civil war that has pitted mainly Christian and

animist rebels in the south against the Muslim Arab north.

In March, Mohammed Osman Hussein, a northern member who represented a constituency in the lakes state in the south, was killed in action.

In January, Sudan blamed Ethiopia for the military offensive

launched in southeast Sudan, which has since resulted in the SPLA's capture of numerous towns. Ethiopia denied the charge.

A coalition of northern and southern opposition forces fighting to overthrow the Islamist government claimed responsibility for the attacks.

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel. 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
14:10	Cartoons
15:00	Global Gardener
15:30	Spell Binder
16:00	Monsters Today
16:30	Brown Town
17:00	French Programmes
19:00	News in French
19:30	News Headlines
19:35	Neighbours
20:00	Soldier's Diary
20:30	Oraph Winfrey Show
21:10	Spencer For Hire
22:00	News in English
22:30	Land's End
23:15	American Gothic

PRAYER TIMES	
04:28	Fajr
05:53	(Sunrise)Dhuha
12:40	Dhuhr
16:20	Asr
19:28	Maghreb
20:53	Isha

CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth	Church Swefeh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church	Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church	Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation	Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church	Tel. 661757
Terra Sancta Church	Tel. 622366
Anglican Church	Tel. 652826
Armenian Catholic Church	Tel. 771331

WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the	Department of Meteorology
It will be moderate and	temperatures 3-4 degrees below
seasonal average. In Aqaba,	it will be hot and seas calm.
Amman	18/28
Aqaba	26/37
Deserts	17/32
Jordan Valley	24/36
Yesterday's high temperatures:	Amman 30, Aqaba 38 Humidity
readings: Amman 43 per	cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR	
19:15	Istanbul (RJ)
20:10	Colombo (RJ)
20:35	Beirut (RJ)
21:00	New Delhi (RJ)
21:10	Cairo (RJ)
21:10	Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
21:15	Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
21:50	Bombay (RJ)
22:05	Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
23:00	Bahrain (RJ)
02:30	Sanaa (RJ)
06:50	Larnaca (CY)
08:45	Beirut (ME)
08:50	Amsterdam (GA)
09:25	London (BA)
10:00	Damascus, Istanbul (PK)
12:00	Hudaiddah, Sanaa (TY)
12:50	Kuwait (KU)
13:30	Jeddah (SV)
14:00	Bahrain, Muscat (GF)
14:15	Cairo (MS)
15:10	Tel Aviv (LY)
15:30	Tunis (TU)
15:30	Al 'Arish (PF)
15:50	Vienna (OS)
17:20	Sharjah (AH)
17:45	Dubai (EK)
17:50	Doha (QR)
20:15	Abu Dhabi, Karachi (PK)
21:40	Damascus, Paris (AF)
00:25	Damascus, Amsterdam (KL)
00:25	Ankara (TK)
04:00	Athens (OA)
06:15	Istanbul (TK)
07:45	Amman (Marka Air- port) (RW)
07:50	Amsterdam (GA)
08:45	Aqaba (RW)
10:05	Amman (QAIA) (RW)
10:50	Amman (Marka Air- port) (RW)
18:20	Tel Aviv (RW)
19:30	Amman (QAIA) (RW)
22:20	Aqaba (RW)
23:50	Amman (Marka Air- port) (RW)
07:00	Larnaca (RJ)
10:50	Rome (RJ)
11:45	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:45	Berlin, London (RJ)
12:00	Tunis (add) (RJ)
12:30	Rome (add) (RJ)
09:15	Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)
11:00	Sanaa, Hudaiddah (TY)
11:50	Kuwait (KU)
12:00	Jeddah (SV)
08:05	Damascus (RJ)
09:25	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:30	Jeddah (RJ)
10:15	Larnaca (RJ)
10:45	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
15:55	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:30	Madrid (RJ)
17:40	Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
18:05	Paris (RJ)
18:40	Brussels, Geneva (RJ)
19:05	Rome (RJ)
19:10	Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
19:10	London, Berlin (RJ)
20:00	Tunis (RJ)
20:40	Rome (RJ)
00:15	Beirut (RJ)
00:40	Istanbul (RJ)
01:05	Cairo (RJ)
04:25	Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
09:05	Damascus (RJ)
09:25	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:30	Jeddah (RJ)
10:15	Larnaca (RJ)
10:45	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
15:55	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:30	Madrid (RJ)
17:40	Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
18:05	Paris (RJ)
18:40	Brussels, Geneva (RJ)
19:05	Rome (RJ)
19:10	Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
19:10	London, Berlin (RJ)
20:00	Tunis (RJ)
20:40	Rome (RJ)
00:15	Beirut (RJ)
00:40	Istanbul (RJ)
01:05	Cairo (RJ)
04:25	Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)

FILM
Children's film
at the British
Library Amman
from 7:00 p.m.

LECTURE
The Great Tem-
ple at the
Center of
Research (Tel.
773111-19)

EXHIBITIONS
Photography exhi-
biting Claudia
at the Jordan
Cultural Cen-
ter (Tel. 773111-19)

3rd St
ZARQA
Princess
Culture
festival
troupes.
exhibition
ings. and



Minister of Social Development Mohammad Khair Mamsar Tuesday confirmed that 120,000 families live under the line of absolute poverty. In a seminar at the Circassian Society, the minister tallied families in need of assistance as including a total of 800,000 persons as well as 100,000 disabled individuals (Petra photo)

Japan grants \$50,000 to increase then release Nubian ibex population

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Japanese government will grant \$50,000 to the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) to help finance the society's plans to increase the number of the Nubian ibexes in the Wadi Mujib Wildlife Reserve.

The grant will also cover the purchase of veterinary equipment for these animals.

A grant agreement was signed at the RSCN head office by RSCN President Anis Muasher and Japanese Ambassador to Jordan Takayuki Kimura.

Nubian ibexes are currently under threat of extinction.

The ibex are sheltered at the Wadi Mujib reserve which comprises an area of 212-square kilometres and is located near the Dead Sea.

The RSCN previously received grants from the Japan World Exposition Commemorative Fund to support the reserve project.

According to an Embassy of Japan statement, the grant is the second in a series of Japanese Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects (GAGP) for the Japanese fiscal year 1997.

Japan's contribution to nature conservation in Jordan dates back to February 20, 1995, when it extended

assistance totalling \$128,967 to the RSCN for the Dana Wildlife Project, the statement said.

The conservation scheme is the first release project to be initiated in Jordan and the first such plan concerning the Nubian ibex in the region.

The project aims to augment declining wild ibex populations inside the Mujib Wildlife Reserve and adjoining territories.

Ibex numbers are estimated at between 800 to 1,000 and to date only within the Mujib and Dana Wildlife Reserves does the taxon enjoy any degree of protection, the statement said.

In 1989, the RSCN established a captive-breeding programme for the species at the 215-square-kilometre reserve to stem the decline in number.

The initial group of 20 Nubian ibex has multiplied to well over 100 individuals and sufficient stocks are now available for release, according to the statement.

Concurrently the world global ibex population has declined, it said.

The release scheme involves freeing groups of 10-15 ibex to be taken from the main herd and discharged in a pre-release enclosure.

Selected individuals will

undergo a 2-3 month habituation programme prior to release, according to the statement.

The ibex then will be monitored closely by a team of researchers and experts using advanced telemetry equipment.

Wadi Mujib is one of six national wildlife reserves managed by the RSCN.

Subsequent to the signing ceremony, Mr. Muasher maintained that the society is pursuing the creation of natural reserves for various wildlife and plants in danger of extinction.

The RSCN will soon release the ibexes in their natural habitat, he said.

Mr. Muasher explained that the ibex might be cross-bred with other tame animals in Jordan.

Jordan is a natural home for the ibex, and it is vital that Jordanians protect these animals from extinction and prohibit their hunt, he stated.

The society exerted strenuous efforts to obtain the ibex from the city of San Diego in the United States, according to Mr. Muasher.

Mr. Kimura lauded RSCN efforts to protect these animals.

Japan is ready to provide the society with further assistance for future projects, he said.

International Committee of the Red Cross releases annual global report

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Despite continuous regional conflicts and crises, the 1996 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) report indicated that more Middle Eastern countries are cooperating with the Geneva-based organisation.

Announcing the annual global report, ICRC Head of Mission in Amman Jacques de Maio yesterday affirmed that subsequent to years of patient efforts, memoranda of understanding were signed with both the Bahraini authorities and the Palestine National Authority (PNA).

These authorised visits to prisoners arrested and detained for security reasons.

Mr. De Maio described the Jordanian government as demonstrating "exemplary cooperation" with his mission in Amman.

In a press conference, he confirmed that the delegation in Amman paid regular visits to Jordanian detainees in the General Intelligence Directorate (GID) and was also given access to detainees under interrogation at the Public Security Directorate (PSD).

These were mainly concentrated in the rehabilitation and correctional centres of Juwaidah and Swaqa and in the Zarqa Military Centre, according to Mr. De Maio.

"In the wake of unrest in mid-August (of last year) in the south of Jordan, there was sharp but short-lived increase in the number of detainees, followed by several ICRC visits to different detention centres," he added.

Last year, riots broke out in the southern city of Karak following a decision to replace a government subsidy on bread with cash.

Mr. De Maio stated that there are no political detainees in Jordan and described the ICRC visits as for "persons who were detained and arrested by security agencies for purely security [related] reasons."

He declined to confer figures on the number of these detainees.

The ICRC official stated that his commission organised two visits by families of Jordanian and Palestinian detainees in Kuwait and that more visits are expected to take place in the near future.

He did not further elaborate on the number of Jordanian or Palestinian detainees in the Gulf emirate.

In 1996, the ICRC responded to a number of crisis situations in the Middle East; "The Grapes of Wrath" operation in southern Lebanon, violence in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and fighting between rival Kurdish factions in northern Iraq.

Intensive courses were organised for the armed forces in Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Syria, and the United Arab Emirates on humanitarian law for military instructors, according to the ICRC report.

The 353-page compendium stated that under the supervision of the Red Cross, 66 Sahrawi prisoners held in Morocco were returned to their families in Western Sahara.

A total of 722 Iraqi prisoners of war (PoWs) were repatriated to Iran, the report stated.

Negligible progress was recorded in accounting for hundreds of Kuwaiti, Saudi Arabian, Iraqi and other nationals reported missing in the Gulf crisis, according to the study.

Regarding the Palestinian self-rule areas, the report described the continuing presence of a growing number of Jewish settlers in Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the close proximity of Israeli and Palestinian communities, and the presence of Israeli troops as giving rise to tension.

A family visiting programme for Palestinian detainees, was "seriously hampered and eventually suspended due to continuous closures of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank," the report said.

According to the ICRC, in Iraq last year, three visits were made to 64 Iranian servicemen captured in the years 1991 and 1992 and detained in Ramadi camp, near Baghdad.

The organisation also made 208 visits to 3,412 detainees held by the Kurdistan Union Party (PUK), the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (KDP) and nine Turkish prisoners held by the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK).

During outbreaks in northern Iraq, the ICRC provided the six main hospitals, in the Erbil and Sulimaniya regions, with emergency medical supplies to treat several thousand casualties.

In Yemen, the ICRC continued visits to detention centres, under the jurisdiction of that country's Ministry of the Interior and Political Security Administration, and developed a major sanitation programme.

ICRC Mission in Amman Spokesman Mou' in Qais asserted that among the ICRC's outstanding achievements in 1996 was a treaty banning land mines worldwide, to be signed in Canada later this year.

Many expressed their support for the treaty, which was the outcome of two years of efforts between the ICRC and other international agencies, he said.

Jordan is among the countries which will benefit from the treaty, as more than 250,000 land mines are planted there as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict, according to Mr. Qais.

One-third of all land mines are located in the Middle East, he added.

According to the report, in 1996, ICRC activists visited 2,100 detention centres in 52 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America to inspect the living and health conditions of more than 172,500 detainees.

Nine ICRC workers were killed in the course of duty last year, Mr. De Maio confirmed.

UNFPA fund to grant JD 200,000 to Arab-African forum

AMMAN (Petra) — The U.N. Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) will grant JD 200,000 to the Amman-based Arab-African Parliamentary Forum (AAPF) to promote the latter's parliamentary activities, as stipulated by an agreement signed in Amman Tuesday.

The agreement was signed for the AAPF by Deputy Samir Habashneh, the forum's secretary general, and by UNFPA Representative Nafis Sadek.

During the signing ceremony, Mr. Habashneh affirmed the grant will finance population studies which the AAPF is undertaking in cooperation with the Jordanian Parliamentary Committee on Development and Population Affairs.

Amman was chosen as the locale for the AAPF regional office during the Arab and African parliamentary meeting, held in South Africa last May, he added.

One of the main AAPF programmes will be a revision of parliamentary legislation in African and Arab countries within the per-



Deputy Samir Habashneh and UNFPA Representative Nafis Sadek Tuesday sign a contract stipulating a JD 200,000 grant to support the Amman-based Arab-African Parliamentary Forum (Petra photo)

spective of policies delineated at the AAPF's first constituent conference, according to Mr. Habash-

neh. The AAPF hopes to boost its programmes by enlisting the assistance of additional

staff members who will be charged with population-related issues, he concluded.

Government endorses chemical weapons ban

AMMAN (Petra) — The government Tuesday endorsed an international treaty banning the production and usage of hazardous chemical weapons.

The treaty had been ratified as international law on April 29, 1997.

According to a statement, following a regular Cabinet session, the treaty's endorsement exemplified the Kingdom's support of international organisations to dispose of weapons of mass destruction.

It was also directed at sustaining efforts directed towards establishing global peace and security, the statement said.

The government's endorsement constitutes the Kingdom's contribution to salvaging the Middle East peace process, according to the statement.

The Cabinet also endorsed a memorandum, signed by the Jordanian and German governments, providing a DM 3 million grant to safeguard the façade of the ancient city of Petra.

The government designated Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf to sign the agreement which is directed towards reducing rock erosion.

The Cabinet approved Jordan's membership on an International Islamic Red Crescent Committee.

The Cabinet also formed a delegation to participate in Arab Ecological Camp activities in Syria.

The delegation will be composed of personnel working for the Ministry of Culture and Youth.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* Children's film "Bedknobs and Broomsticks" at the British Council, Jabal Amman at 5:00 p.m.

LECTURE

Petra: The Great Temple by Martha Joukowsky at the American Center of Oriental Research (Tel. 846-117) at 7:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Photography exhibition by Claudia Pedotti at the Jordan Arts and Crafts Centre/Artisana, Jabal Amman, Second Circle (Tel. 647858) until Aug. 1

NEWS IN BRIEF

Government approves ambassador

AMMAN (Petra) — The government has approved the Ugandan nomination of Mohammad Ahmad Kaysooli as Uganda's non-resident ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Jordan.

Jordan, Mauritania to convene

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Mauritania Tuesday signed minutes of a meeting regarding cooperation between the Jordan National Electric Power Company (NEPCO) and the Mauritanian National Water and Electricity Company (MNWEC). The two sides agreed to hold frequent meetings as well as to exchange information and expertise in the field of electricity. The minutes were signed by NEPCO Director General Mohammad Said Arafah and MNWEC Director General Sidi Weld El Riha.

3rd Shabib Festival announced

ZARQA (Petra) — Under the patronage of HRH Princess Rajwa Ali, the third Shabib Festival for Culture and Art will be held at Shabib archaeological site east of Zarqa. Performing at the three-day festival will be several Arab singers, poets and troupes. The festival is also slated to include two exhibitions — one for children's books, and drawings, and the second for children's toys.

Early childhood specialists, officials meet to discuss NTFC strategies

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Over 50 officials and early childhood specialists met Tuesday to discuss National Task Force for Children (NTFC) strategies.

The meeting, held at the organisation's headquarters in Shmeisani, was a preparatory step for a general meeting of all organisations and individuals concerned with children's welfare in the Kingdom, according to former Minister of Social Development Inam Mufti.

The NTFC, a non-governmental organisation established in 1995 by Royal Decree and chaired by Her Majesty Queen Noor, acts as a coordinating and supporting agency for national efforts for children's survival, protection, development and participatory rights.

In co-partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the NTFC is also working for the advancement of local legislation on children's rights and child protection.

"The aim of this coalition is to coordinate, collaborate and consolidate existing institutions and specialists working in the field of child welfare to establish the National Coalition for Children (NCCI)," Ms. Mufti told the gathering.

She emphasised that the NTFC aims to "meet the needs and demands of our children, and prepare the proper milieu to face future challenges and issues that our children might be properly raised."

"The NTFC does not want to impose ideas or rules, but rather prefers to meet with specialists and child advocates," Ms. Mufti maintained.

She described the NTFC as intending to form a communication net to exchange information, and update studies on early childhood.

Childhood needs reviewed

Nadia Srour, who presented a review on several UNICEF studies on early childhood in Jordan, stated that these revealed a lack of basic needs met and other early childhood deficits.

Dr. Srour criticised statistics concerning day-care centres and kindergartens in the Kingdom, as well as the number of teachers and children at these institutions.

"There are statistics, but unfortunately they contain inaccuracies, and, at some points, are contradictory," Dr. Srour said. "This was a major obstacle in attempting to link these

numbers to reality."

Further, she said that the study revealed that priorities, such as legislation regarding children's rights, parental awareness concerning aspects of their children's day-care centres, pertinent institutes relating thereto and their organisation, must receive a greater focus.

Dr. Srour also pointed to the poor conditions in some kindergartens in terms of offering heat, proper nourishment, education, competent teachers, commensurate pay and other relevant facilities.

The NTFC, through its Research and Database Centre for Children, will compile comprehensive research to highlight children's needs and rights and disseminate data to all concerned institutions.

Jordan signed the Arab Charter on the Rights of the Arab Child in 1987 and ratified the International Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991.

These rights include: the right to life, development, protection and societal participation.

The NTFC also monitors the condition and status of children in accordance with the Arab and International Convention on the Rights of the Child and the National Plan Action for Children.

Three weeks ago the opposition pushed the Taliban back to within 20 kilometres of Kabul. Although

The Red Cross communiqué also criticises opposition commanders for denying them access to some of the thousands of prisoners

Mr. Gurtner said that the ICRC is getting access to most of the detention centres in the strongholds of the

Born in Islamic schools for Afghan war refugees living in neighbouring Pakistan, the Taliban quickly took control of most of the country, including Kabul, which it took in September. It has imposed strict interpretations of Islamic law in areas it has conquered.

A guard at the Baharak prison camp watches some 1,600 prisoners-of-war in the opposition stronghold of the Panjsher Valley north of the Afghan capital Kabul. The International Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva have released a communique criticising the authorities in the opposition-held northern Afghanistan for denying the ICRC access to an estimated 3,000 prisoners-of-war, prompting a 'major humanitarian alert' (Reuter photo)

The official who declined to be identified said South Korea has 16 airports of

Ministry and an air force specialist on air-traffic control for next week's exami-

A mother and her daughter, both Americans, of

and take off of planes. It would also inspect airports' emergency plans to deal with accidents.

"I have invited President Clinton to visit us in this golden jubilee year. He is leine Albright is expected to visit before the end of 1997. Jimmy Carter, who visited

Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao visited the United States in 1994. U.S. First Lady Hillary Clinton came to India in 1995, and Secretary of State Made-

"Although we would like to be friendly with the United States, it is for them to take notice of the level."

India is waiting for Washington to send an ambassador to New Delhi to replace Frank Wisner, who quit the diplomatic corps for the private sector last month.

Indian producer killed in

Cancer killed in

The Freedom Conference, meanwhile, an umbrella group of about two dozen

More than 20,000 people have died in Indian-administered Kashmir since the launch of an armed separatist campaign in 1989.

Maharashtra State Chief Minister Manohar Joshi told a press conference: "We will get the killers soon. All exit points from the city have been sealed." He said the Bombay underworld "now seems to be tar-

ister Manohar Joshi told a
the killers soon. All exit
sealed."

Mr. Sheorey described Kuma as a producer, with about eight film

industry. This is a horrible
monists and the underworld.”
as a very “successful” film
to his credit.

Doctors said he was in an unstable condition Tuesday after suffering burns to 70 per cent of his body.

demanded that disgraced Beijing Party Secretary Chen Xitong be tried for corruption.

The fate of Mr. Chen, who was placed under house arrest in Beijing, was not clear. In addition to tailing Mr. Jin, the capital's security organs put a group of plainclothes police on to veteran

but back in Beijing, police were taking no chances.

In addition to tailing Mr. Jin, the capital's security organs put a group of plainclothes police on to veteran

it used to only be one or two," she said.

The wife of imprisoned activist Liu Xiaobo said she too had been put under police surveillance.

[illegible]

Kenyan alliance suspends 'mass action' for 10 days

NAIROBI (R) — An alliance of opposition-backed groups demanding constitutional reforms in Kenya has suspended "mass action" for 10 days to allow religious leaders to mediate with the ruling party.

In a statement quoted by Nairobi newspapers Tuesday, the National Convention Executive Council (NCEC) said it had learned that Anglican Archbishop David Gitari had asked for mass action to be suspended pending talks between clerics and the ruling party.

The NCEC therefore decided Monday to suspend mass rallies and demonstrations "to give dialogue a chance" through talks between 10 clergymen and the ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU) party.

The suspension followed the deaths of four people, including two policemen, during rallies and clashes last Friday, which prompted Kenyan leaders and foreign diplomats to urge dialogue.

The NCEC was widely criticised by government officials and newspapers over the killing of the two policemen during a general strike called by the alliance that met with only mixed success.

The independent Daily Nation newspaper said Tuesday four youths were arrested at the Nairobi offices of Raila Odinga's opposition National Development Party (NDP) Monday in connection with the death of one of the policemen Friday.

It said another 88 people were charged elsewhere with involvement in other incidents Friday and 30 other suspects remained in custody. Mr. Odinga said the NDP opposed violence.

Even before Friday's violence, Mr. Moi, aged 73 and in power since the death of founding President Jomo Kenyatta in 1978, had managed to divide the NCEC by offering limited constitutional reforms and pledging a full constitutional review after polls.

Reforms sought by the NCEC would reduce the power of Mr. Moi, who is seeking a new five-year term at a general election this year. No date has been set for presidential and parliamentary polls.

But Mr. Moi's government has come under renewed pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which halted a key aid package on July 31 because of concern at high-level corruption in Kenya.

The IMF moved to the Kenyan shilling sinking to a record official low against the dollar last Thursday as some foreign investors pulled out. The shilling took a further beating Monday after a slight recovery and opened at an official record low Tuesday of 70.48 to the U.S. dollar.

A World Bank official said Monday the World Bank delayed paying part of a loan to Kenya and would find it hard to hand over money until the government addressed corruption concerns.

The official, who asked not to be named, said in Washington the bank shared the concerns of the IMF about corruption.

"The second tranche of our structural adjustment loan had been suspended because policy conditions (on privatisation) had not been met, but we would find it difficult to release this money until the IMF programme is back on track," he said.

He said Kenya received one tranche of the loan last year, but the second tranche of just over \$71 million was not paid.

An energy sector loan, approved by the World Bank board in Washington in June, could also be in doubt because the IMF had singled out energy as a sector suspected of mismanagement.



Greenpeace swimmers protest at sea by trying to stop the Stena Dee platform from reaching British Petroleum's Foinaven oil field in the northern Atlantic (Reuters photo)

Greenpeace swimmers stop oil platform

LONDON (R) — Greenpeace swimmers plunged into the North Atlantic in front of a mobile BP oil rig Monday in a further bid to prevent the platform from reaching the new Foinaven oil field.

"It (the rig) just started moving, so we put four swimmers into the water about a third of a mile in front of it and it stopped again," a campaigner for the environmental activist group reported by telephone from a nearby vessel.

The rig, British Petroleum Co PLC's Stena Dee, was drifting 50 miles north-west of the Orkney Islands and about 35 kilometres

south of the massive Foinaven field.

It was boarded by Greenpeace activists north of the Shetland Islands Saturday and was also stopped by Greenpeace swimmers Sunday.

Two activists, identified only as Germans, were still on the Stena Dee, having chained themselves to one of the platform's legs.

"We are going to stay as long as possible," one of the two said by satellite phone from the Stena Dee.

Greenpeace wants the oil rig to return to Norway and called on BP to abandon the Foinaven project, the first to be developed in deep

waters west of the Shetland Islands.

The lobby group wants an end to worldwide oil exploration to cut carbon dioxide emissions and halt climate change.

A BP spokesman said Greenpeace's action would not delay its overall operations at Foinaven which is expected to produce oil by the end of the year.

The project has suffered a series of technological mishaps. It was originally due on-stream the middle of 1996.

The spokesman said BP's priority at the moment was the safety of all on board of the Stena Dee.

Independence generation still sees Pakistan facing challenges 50 years on

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Many of the generation which saw Pakistan created after independence from Britain 50 years ago still see the country at a crossroads and facing serious political, economic and social challenges.

With Pakistan under military rule for more than half of its life since gaining independence on Aug. 14, 1947, and none of its civilian governments completing a full term, many Pakistanis point the finger at an insincere leadership and power politics, as reasons for the nation's ill-fortune.

Half of the country was lost during Pakistan's first brush with being ruled by a military dictatorship, when east Pakistan seceded in 1971 and became independent Bangladesh.

"We have lost east Pakistan. We should be ashamed. We have done dishonesty to this country," Bemoans Hashim Reza, 87, who was a close associate of the nation's founding father Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Mr. Reza, a retired bureaucrat, who joined the civil service in 1934, had worked under Mohammad Ali Jinnah for the rehabilitation of millions of refugees who migrated to Pakistan, carved out of British India in 1947.

Pakistan inherited very little from the partition of the subcontinent and was soon pushed into turmoil when its founding father died soon after indepen-

dence and the nation ran afoul of its bigger neighbour, India.

The two sides, while celebrating 50 years as independent countries, have fought two of three wars over lingering disputes over who owns the predominantly Muslim Kashmir region.

The tension between the neighbours has triggered an arms race, with India and Pakistan both claiming nuclear capability and spending massively on defence.

Pakistan's economy suffers under \$60 billion in domestic and foreign debts and analysts say the country's economic system has fostered widespread disparity in income distribution.

A limited feudal and industrial section of the society is reaping the benefits of the growth and the living conditions of a majority of Pakistanis has deteriorated, they say.

Fifty years on, since the birth of their country, a quarter of the 135 million Pakistanis live below the poverty line.

Pakistan has slid into a culture of violence, attributed by many to rampant political and administrative corruption.

The Afghan war next door has put a further burden on Pakistan and has triggered an influx of three million refugees and a proliferation of arms and drugs among Pakistani society.

Nationhood still seems a long way off despite the common bond of Islam among its people. Ethnic

problems plague Karachi and other parts of southern Sindh province where several thousand people have died in recurring violence over the years.

For the first time in its history, the country faces an unprecedented upsurge in sectarian trouble in Punjab province, home to 60 per cent of the population, with 150 deaths this year attributed to sectarian strife between Sunni and Shiite Muslims.

A high death toll, near so far 50 in August alone, prompted deployment of paramilitary troops in Punjab to curb violence ahead of the golden jubilee.

Growing violence and security concerns could mar the independence anniversary but at least some Pakistanis are looking to the future.

Former Prime Minister Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, who was a 20-year-old student when Pakistan came into being, says his expectations for the country are boundless.

"There has been progress in many fields," he said. "It was not 100 percent but everybody is proud of Pakistan."

"The ups and downs were there because the democratic system was damaged. But the people here believe the future ahead is bright," Mr. Jatoi said.

Khmer Rouge reportedly join Royalists; Hun Sen meets king

BEIJING (Agencies) — Khmer Rouge fighters have joined soldiers loyal to Prince Norodom Ranariddh to defend outpost border village of Thmar Don, Thai army sources said Tuesday.

Both Thmar Don and O Smach, some 40 kilometres to the east, the last town under the control of Prince Ranariddh's forces, were quiet Tuesday morning. The outposts are among the last significant pockets of resistance to the forces of Mr. Hun Sen.

Thmar Don is in a small wedge of Cambodia's remote northwest on the border with Thailand where several thousand soldiers loyal to Prince Norodom Ranariddh have withdrawn to make a stand against government forces under Mr. Hun Sen.

Fighters from the remnants of the Khmer Rouge movement are holed up some 70 kilometres to the east.

Prince Ranariddh, barred from visiting the border area since his arrival in the Thai capital Bangkok last Saturday, has repeatedly denied his forces were cooperating militarily or politically with Khmer Rouge guerrillas.

Meanwhile Cambodian Strongman Hun Sen met King Norodom Sihanouk Tuesday to try to secure the monarch's stamp of approval for his seizure of power

last month.

A police escort whisked Second Prime Minister Hun Sen and other senior Cambodian officials out of King Sihanouk's tightly-guarded residence in the Chinese capital after a five-hour meeting with the king.

Cambodian embassy officials declined to comment on the meeting, but analysts have said Mr. Hun Sen, who ousted the king's son, co-Premier, Norodom Ranariddh, in a July coup, would seek the monarch's political blessing for his power grab.

The second prime minister arrived in the Chinese capital Monday accompanied by newly appointed First Prime Minister Ung Huot, acting head of state, Chea Sim and a delegation of government officials.

King Sihanouk said earlier that the meeting at his residence would be strictly private, indicating that his decision to withhold an official audience could signal his disapproval of the Cambodian strongman's putsch.

Officials of King Sihanouk's cabinet refused to comment.

King Sihanouk has been in Beijing for medical treatment since February, but has said he will return to Cambodia soon.

The meeting followed a Monday offer to abdicate by King Sihanouk, who has so far declined to endorse Mr. Hun Sen's rule, instead crit-

icising Mr. Ung Huot as a "puppet" of Mr. Hun Sen and likening the current political situation in his country to a "comedy."

King Sihanouk, who has hinted his strong disapproval of Hun Sen's actions, said Monday he was ready to give up the throne as soon as he was confident that the Cambodian leader would not criticise him for doing so.

In Bangkok, Ranariddh said Monday he took his father's offer of abdication as an expression of disapproval of Mr. Hun Sen and slammed his opponent for pushing Cambodia into instability and toward the brink of an all-out civil war.

While Mr. Hun Sen was meeting the king, his new regime in Phnom Penh tightened the screws on Prince Ranariddh by issuing a warrant for the arrest of the deposed prince on charges of weapons smuggling.

Ranariddh fled Cambodia in early July, just before Mr. Hun Sen launched his bloody coup. Cambodia's national assembly voted last Wednesday to strip the prince of his parliamentary immunity.

But a political ally said Tuesday Prince Norodom Ranariddh plans to quit self-exile in Thailand and join his supporters in the jungles of northern Cambodia in his quest to regain power.

Prince Ranariddh's former finance minister, Sam Rainsy, said the deposed prince was negotiating with Thai authorities for safe passage across the border into opposition-controlled areas.

"Immediately he is trying to go back to Cambodia in the regions not controlled by (co-premier) Hun Sen forces," Mr. Sam Rainsy, himself a self-exiled opposition leader, told Reuters in Australia.

"As long as he can cross the border like other Cambodian leaders opposed to Hun Sen, there will be people inside Cambodia who will take care of those people," he added.

A weapons shipment, seized at Cambodia's main port in late May, sparked a serious row between Mr. Hun Sen and Prince Ranariddh and led to a tense stand-off between their security forces.

Mr. Hun Sen called for legal action over the arms, which he said Prince Ranariddh was importing illegally. The prince denied the charges, saying he was entitled to the equipment for use by his personal security force.

Since ousting Ranariddh, Hun Sen has said the prince was free to come back to Cambodia but would have to face court charges in the weapons case and for illegal negotiations with the outlawed Khmer Rouge guerrilla group.

Killers of S. African communist leader deny conspiracy

PRETORIA (AFP) — Two convicted right-wing assassins fought Tuesday to prevent disclosure of statements which, according to observers, suggest they murdered communist leader, Chris Hani as part of a wider conspiracy.

Janusz Walus and Clive Derby-Lewis, who are serving life jail terms for the April 10, 1993, killing, have said in written confessions to South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission that they acted alone.

The two, however, said that they were politically motivated by South Africa's most powerful right-wing group at the time, the Conservative Party (CP), which they said was "at war" with black liberation groups.

Derby-Lewis — formerly a senior CP leader and parliament member — and Walus both denied guilt during their trial, but have since applied for amnesty to the Truth Commission.

The Commission, which is probing human rights abuses of the apartheid era, has the power to grant amnesty to perpetrators who

fully admit their guilt and can prove political motives.

In statements to the commission, Walus said he and Derby-Lewis carried out the murder "alone," disputing reports it was masterminded by the apartheid government still in power.

South African newspapers have also speculated that some of Hani's own allies in the now-ruling African National Congress (ANC) may have been involved.

Hani, an enormously popular leader, was shot in the head at pointblank range outside his home near Johannesburg.

Lawyers for Hani's family have claimed the killers made statements to police shortly after the murder in which they suggested others may have been involved in the deed, including Derby-Lewis' wife, Gaye.

Gaye Derby-Lewis was charged three years ago and acquitted of involvement in the murder, which nearly sparked a race war in the turbulent period before South Africa's historic April 1994 elections.

Harry Prinsloo, a lawyer for Derby-Lewis, however

said the statements were "inadmissible" because police had given the accused alcohol and deprived them of sleep.

He further claimed that one of the policemen taking the statement was a junior officer who was not suitably qualified in interrogations.

"These statements were acquired in an involuntary manner and as such the applicants have the constitutional right to remain silent," Mr. Prinsloo said.

One of the truth commissioners, Judge Hassan Mall, meanwhile argued that the panel required a "full disclosure" of all statements and evidence, regardless of their admissibility.

"We are not deciding the guilt or innocence of the applicant. We are deciding whether to grant them amnesty," Judge Mall argued before calling a recess.

Walus said Monday he emigrated to south Africa from Poland because he believed it was "governed by Afrikaners who would never capitulate to communism, the latter ideology being by definition godless and thus anti-Christian."

He said he feared "the coming to power of Mr. Hani... would plunge South Africa into a communism of either the same or worse type than that experienced... in Poland."

Walus, who admitted to pulling the trigger of an illegal gun supplied by Derby-Lewis, added he considered "South Africa was at war."

The right-wing CP, to which both he and Derby-Lewis belonged, "saw Mr. Hani as a real danger and said so."

Derby-Lewis, who was a senior CP leader and a member of parliament at the time, said in his statement that he helped devise a plan to assassinate Hani.

The Hani murder hearings have been attended by several hundred protesters, who sang and pointed at the killers Monday, chanting "down with the murderers."

The event has also been attended by senior political figures, including CP leaders and President Nelson Mandela's controversial ex-wife, Wanie Madikizela-Mandela.

India reflects on 50 years of success ... and failure

NEW DELHI (AFP) — "At the stroke of the midnight hour," said Jawaharlal Nehru as the seconds ticked away towards August 15, 1947, "when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom."

His following words, however, still hang unanswered, half a century later. "Are we brave enough and wise enough," the country's first prime minister asked, "to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?"

India and its 960 million people, spread over 3,287,263 square kilometres, communicating in around 1,000 languages and dialects and worshipping hundreds of gods, seem unconvinced over what reply to give as prepares to mark Friday 50 years since gaining independence.

The lack of spontaneous public euphoria over the anniversary seems to suggest that the majority of Indians feel the failures of the past have matched the successes.

Government plans, too, have been strangely muted. Only a re-run of Nehru's historic speech before parliament at midnight Thursday has captured the imagination.

J. N. Dixit, however, a former Indian foreign secretary, is determined to champion the country's many achievements as part of "a national balance sheet" spanning

social, political and economic affairs.

When the British were shamed into leaving India by Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent protest movement, the country, with a history of famines, could not feed its 360 million population.

Today, India is a food exporter. Life expectancy has risen from around 32 to 61 years while literacy rates have tripled, half the population can now read and write.

The economy has grown nearly 15-fold from a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$19 billion in 1950 to around \$280 billion. Mr. Dixit admits that India, which has fought three wars with Pakistan and one border conflict with China since 1947, still has "adversarial relations" with its neighbours.

He says it must still "get its act together economically", admits there is "an undercurrent of anarchy in democracy" and that concerns remain over the country's booming population and its failure to tackle poverty.

But he is "confident about my country and its future."

Former finance minister, Manmohan Singh, who launched massive economic reforms in India after four decades of centralised planning ended in a foreign exchange crisis in 1991, is more concerned over what has remained undone.

Compare India 1947 with India 1997, he argues, and you have a success story.

Compare India's past 50 years of progress to that of its Asian "tiger economy" neighbours, and you have failure.

"We have not done as well as we should have done," he says.

Mr. Singh believes India can become an economic superpower, but it must invest massively in its infrastructure, and more crucially, in its people.

Around 360 million Indians today live under the poverty line.

Their lives have barely changed since the British left. In percentage terms, poverty levels have been cut. In actual terms, the numbers continue to rise.

Women and children have suffered in particular.

The South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude estimates there are 60 million Indian children who work full time, many in dangerous conditions. The U.N. human rights committee says child marriages, mutilation, dowry deaths and self-immolation of widows remain rife in certain areas.

Around 4,000 women are killed every year for failing to pay large enough dowries. Feticide and infanticide of females continue.

Mr. Singh links social problems to economic ones.

"We have to create an environment where we can emerge as a competitive economy and a compassionate humane society. The next three to four years are crucial."

On August 15, Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral will try to lift the nation.

"We have made tremendous advances in science and technology," he argues. "Fifty years back, we were importing sewing needles, bicycles, almost everything. Today we launch satellites. But the way ahead will be hard. It is like climbing a hill," he says.

Corruption, in particular, he says, "has seeped into the veins of this nation" and is making the gradient steeper still.

K. R. Narayanan, sworn in last month as India's first "untouchable" president, warns of the "evils of communism, casteism, violence and corruption."

For many, however, India remains a miracle. Simply because this myriad of cultures, peoples and influences, has survived as a democracy.

British-born Indian writer Salman Rushdie acknowledges the country's wars.

But he adds: "I want to extol the virtues of the most important thing that came into being on that midnight, 50 years ago, the innovation that has survived all that history could throw at it; the so-called idea of India."

Jordan Times

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One down, more to go

AS ATTENTION is focused on His Majesty King Hussein's meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Aqaba today, U.S. envoy to the Middle East Dennis Ross departs the area, having stitched together a security coordination agreement between the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and Israel that has been hailed as some kind of breakthrough. The rejuvenation of security cooperation between the two sides in the presence of U.S. security experts has already been described as an initial success, albeit a modest one, upon which Washington is hoping to proceed with its next move when U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright arrives in the region by the end of August. Ross has praised the revival of security coordination but went on to add that the political dimensions have also to be addressed as at least complementary to the security issue.

Against this backdrop and beyond the security coordination struck between the two sides, little has been accomplished thus far in terms of the wider political considerations still at the heart of everything else separating the two sides. Much now depends on King Hussein's summit with Prime Minister Netanyahu, who by now must have felt the increasing pressure against his collective punishment posture against the Palestinian people and his insistence that security matters be divorced from all other issues affecting the stalemated peace process.

Israel has eased slightly its siege against the Palestinians following His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan's talks with Netanyahu a few days ago. But much remains to be done in order to improve the overall political climate in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The Israeli prime minister has yet to deliver on his long-standing promise to King Hussein to provide a "miracle" of sorts to push the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks forward. Today could be just the day to make good on that pledge made during the two leaders' talks in Washington last spring when they were invited by President Bill Clinton to the White House.

The Aqaba talks are expected to cover a wide range of subjects including Netanyahu's call for an accelerated pace of negotiations aiming to push forward the final status talks ahead of schedule. The Palestinian side is naturally lukewarm to the idea which has since been endorsed by the U.S. because without the implementation of the overdue redeployments, Israel would be holding all the cards. With less than four per cent of the Palestinian territories liberated, there is every reason to fear that final status talks at this stage would put the PNA at a clear disadvantage. Yet the most important issue facing the region now is to put the Palestinian-Israeli talks on track again with a view to implementing the Oslo accords to which all sides profess commitment. It would not be an exaggeration to conclude, therefore, that much hope is being pinned on the Aqaba meeting so that the parties can get on with the business of introducing more confidence-building measures on the way to a comprehensive and lasting peace. The area has lost six precious months and can ill-afford any additional procrastination.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i said that since the moment of the suicide bomb attack in Jerusalem's market place, two weeks ago, the Israeli authorities have been regarding the Palestinian Authority as the responsible party, although the identity of the bombers has not yet been determined. Tareq Masarweh said that Benjamin Netanyahu has found in this event a pretext for dictating his absolute will on the Palestinian people and its leadership and for pursuing policies intended to deprive the Palestinians of their basic rights. It is regrettable to see the world community watching the humiliation, starvation and dehumanisation of the Palestinians whose lands, along with those of Syria and Lebanon, remain under occupation resulting from armed aggression in 1967, without doing anything to address this situation, said the writer. For Washington and London, Israel's presence on the Arab lands is not occupation that needs to be terminated, he added. London and Washington, which considered Iraq's brief occupation of Kuwait and the former Soviet Union's incursion into Hungary in 1956 as flagrant forms of aggression, do not consider Israel's presence in the Arab lands of Syria, Palestine and Lebanon since 1967 as a form of occupation. Thus, said the writer, the two capitals are condoning all Israel's actions directed against humanity.

A WRITER for Al Dustour said a hot autumn is expected this year, in view of the general elections due on Nov. 4, and said that in light of the boycott of some political parties of these elections, Jordan is expected to witness a real change regarding deputies in the coming 13th parliament. Basem Sakdijha said that one should not be surprised by the outcome of the coming elections because of the absence of well-known personalities in the Islamic and leftist groups who decided to boycott the elections on their own free will, either as individuals or as members of political parties or organisations. New names will no doubt surface and new ideas are bound to be floated in the coming parliament's sessions, he predicted. The writer expressed the view that many of the hitherto unknown personalities will take advantage of the boycott situation and run for parliament's seats, and the overall picture of the parliament will never be the same as before.

Washington Watch

'Only if the domination of the pro-Israeli lobby is broken can there be real change in the U.S.'

By Dr. James J. Zogby

THERE CAN be no doubt that the peace process is in a grave crisis. The actions of suicide bombers and the ever-expanding Israeli settlements point to deep, unresolved problems that plague the search for peace in the Middle East.

Simply put, some Palestinian extremists are opposed to peace with Israel. They, therefore, seek at key moments to create violent and deadly crisis that will spread insecurity and provoke a hostile Israeli reaction and in turn, weaken the legitimacy of the Palestinian leadership that has opted in favour of a negotiated settlement with Israel. At the same time, the Israeli government has clearly not forsaken its ambition to control what they term Eretz Israel. While seeking to rid itself of control of the daily lives of Palestinians in the urban areas of West Bank and Gaza, there is not an Israeli commitment to recognise Palestinian sovereignty in that land.

It is precisely this two-pronged dilemma to which the U.S. ambassador to Israel, Martin Indyk, referred when he noted that the underpinnings of the Oslo agreement had broken down. And it was the same set of issues that Secretary of State Madeleine Albright addressed in her recent Middle East policy speech.

The secretary was right in noting that in this crisis situation the role of an even-handed honest broker is more important than ever. But the ability of the U.S. to play such a role is impaired by the behaviour of the Congress which has erected its own obstacles to the search for peace in the Middle East.

The actions of the U.S. Congress which I have reviewed in the past few weeks have served to further enflame Palestinians, give comfort to the intransigent Israeli government and impede the ability of the administration to conduct diplomacy in the pursuit of peace.

In many ways this is not a new story. For many decades now, successive Congresses have given in to Israeli excesses, encouraging them, rewarding their behaviour and shielding them from negative diplomatic consequences.

Since the 1970s, State Department officials have complained that their hands were being tied by domestic U.S. political considerations. Initiatives taken by several administrations were undercut

by congressional actions or were suspended in reaction to congressional threats. All the while Congress was providing excessive benefits for Israel and punishing the Arabs with hostile legislation.

From its inception, the design of the pro-Israel lobby has been to use Congress as a lever against the State Department which they accused of being dominated by "Arabists," i.e. diplomats who had served in the Arab World and understood the issues and actions that must be passed to foster U.S.-Arab ties.

As a result of more than three decades of sustained political efforts, Congress has itself become a powerful force for Israel, taking actions that often contradict not only U.S. interests but also normal congressional behaviour.

Congress, for example, is usually disinclined to give foreign aid, except when it goes to Israel. Congress is usually inclined toward isolationism, except when engagement is required to serve Israel's interests. And Congress is normally protective of U.S. economic interests, again except when it comes to Israel.

As a result of decades of political pressure by the pro-Israel lobby on Congress, and of Congress on the administration, the very definition of U.S. interests in the Middle East has changed.

Congressional behaviour on all these matters is the result of a long-standing, well-financed political effort to influence the legislative body. The tactics used in this effort are well-known: campaign financing, grass-roots mobilisation, organised uncontested issue campaigns and fear.

In each election cycle, organised political contributions by pro-Israel forces are between \$8 to \$10 million directly into congressional campaigns (much more goes into the political parties and the presidential races). While this amount is not large, given the overall amount spent on political campaigns, it is highly effective because it is targeted and uncontested by pro-Arab contributions. Pro-Israel contributions are targeted on members of the congressional committees that vote on Israeli issues, campaigns of "friends of Israel" who are in need of help, and campaigns of opponents of members of Congress who are deemed the "enemies of Israel."

Before each election, every member of Congress and every candidate for a congressional

seat are visited by a lobbyist for Israel and presented with issue briefs of positions favoured by the lobby. Acceptance of these policies wins support, rejection carries the threat of opposition.

Since no countercampaign has ever been waged, most candidates choose the path of least resistance, i.e., acceptance of the pro-Israel position. Thus pro-Israel lobbyists have often succeeded in establishing that their positions are the only ones possible.

Since, in a few instances, organised efforts by pro-Israel groups have actually contributed to the defeat of some of the members of Congress who have opposed them, their threats appear to have teeth. In reality, fear of their power is greatly overrated since many of their highly touted victories were the result of local issues affecting the outcome of elections. There are also many instances where supporters of Israel with strong support from the lobby were defeated due to the same local issues. Nevertheless, the fear of their power is widely spread and, given the choice, most members of Congress would prefer not to find out for themselves whether or not the lobby is as invincible as it claims to be.

The bottom line is that because the positions and myths of the pro-Israel lobby have not been effectively combated, they have developed a life of their own and are accepted by too many politicians. Nevertheless, it is important to note that they are not shared by the majority of the voting public.

As a result, two separate campaigns take place in every election. Politicians running for office will write letters to pro-Israel donors and speak before pro-Israel audiences and sign statements of support for Israeli interests — seeking their financial support in their campaigns. But they will never address any of these same issues before their larger voting constituencies. No members of the 105th Congress running for reelection in 1998 will go before voters in their respective districts and announce with pride how much money they voted to send to Israel, or how many exceptions they allowed for Israel, or how many punitive measures they passed against the Palestinians. Those actions are not done to win voters' support and, therefore, remain secrets known only in Washington and in congressional communications with supporters of Israel.

Beginning in 1994, Benjamin Netanyahu, the leader of Likud, sent a small

group of agents to Washington to work against the peace process and establish independent ties with Congress. Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin denounced this effort as traitorous and termed the Likud group "the gang of three." They succeeded in their work and after the November 1994 victory of the Republicans, this group found a congressional leadership responsive to their anti-peace message. From 1994 to 1996 they were able to push through a number of congressional initiatives that complicated the peace process and frustrated U.S. and Labour government efforts to make peace with the Palestinians and Syrians.

There was some tension in the pro-Israel lobby in those years reflecting a split in loyalty in the Jewish community between those who supported the Labour government and those who were allies of Likud and opponents of compromise with Arabs. But with Likud now in power, that situation has been resolved and the anti-peace and anti-Arab activities in Congress have accelerated and are now virtually out of control.

It is true that the president can confront Congress and the ideas of the pro-Israel lobby. In most instances in the past, when the president has directly challenged the lobby they have won — but usually at an enormous cost. In any case, Arabs and Arab Americans cannot abdicate their responsibility to help themselves in this crisis situation — and I believe, if a concerted campaign is waged in the U.S., public opinion can be mobilised, Congress can be challenged and the will of the administration to act can be strengthened.

The situation can be remedied but only if Arabs and Arab Americans wage an intense campaign. This campaign must have two parts. Arabs, for their part, must raise in a significant way their just demands of peace. An issue campaign of substantial proportions must be waged in the U.S. in an effort to counter years of uncontested pro-Israel propaganda. Arab Americans, on the other hand, must target a few members of Congress, expose their actions to their constituents and work aggressively to defeat them at the polls. Only if the issue of domination of the pro-Israel lobby is broken and their electoral hegemony is ended can there be real change in the U.S.

The combination of these two ideologies now driving congressional action on the Middle East has been fatal for the peace process. These groups, for example, never supported the Oslo peace process, even in the heady days of September 1993. On the night of Sept. 13, 1993, I left a meeting of Arab American and Jewish American leaders with President Clinton at the White House to go to CNN to debate former U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, a neo-conservative Republican.

Her opposition to Oslo from the first day was indicative of the attitudes of her fellow travellers in the neo-conservative movement. As their spiritual patron, former President Ronald Reagan, had rejected détente with the Soviet Union as surrendering to totalitarianism, these Republicans derided Oslo as acquiescing to terrorism. For Israel to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Syria, they believed, was akin to betraying "Western values."

As in the case of cold war, instead of making peace with the enemy, they sought to defeat the enemy. In this context, the new Republican leadership found common cause with the Likud.

Beginning in 1994, Benjamin Netanyahu, the leader of Likud, sent a small

group of agents to Washington to work against the peace process and establish independent ties with Congress. Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin denounced this effort as traitorous and termed the Likud group "the gang of three." They succeeded in their work and after the November 1994 victory of the Republicans, this group found a congressional leadership responsive to their anti-peace message. From 1994 to 1996 they were able to push through a number of congressional initiatives that complicated the peace process and frustrated U.S. and Labour government efforts to make peace with the Palestinians and Syrians.

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'Accommodation, commitment and compromise should rule' for peace and security to prosper

By Izzat R. Dajani

THERE CERTAINLY is a fine line between taking assertive measures to protect the citizens of Israel and the risk of destroying the entire work towards peace that has been expended to date. It is totally unacceptable that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should accuse the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat of encouraging violence in the wake of the most recent suicide bomb attacks in West Jerusalem.

Ironically, it is Israel's arrogance and senselessness that make Palestinians, most of who still live under Israeli occupation, feel helpless and desperate. It is frightfully alarming that extremism is on the increase, but it is equally alarming that distrust of Israel and its government's intentions is gaining ground even among the moderate Arab countries that have already signed peace treaties with the Jewish state.

Mr. Netanyahu's pledge of peace with security to the Israelis was initiated with an array of provocations against the Palestinians, which started with the tunnel opening near Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. This was followed by unnecessary prolongation of the Hebron talks, deadlock on the future of Jerusalem, building of new settlements and subjecting the Palestinians to very

harsh conditions through closure of their territories. Israel most recently froze \$95 million in tax revenues, due to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), a move that can only help destabilise and discredit the authority while strengthening rejectionists, such as Hamas.

It is important to note in this context that Israel's headline and uncompromising approach have been helped by its continued reliance on U.S. support and by Arab divisiveness and weakness. The American policy in the Middle East is not just biased and one-sided, it is also insulting. The peoples of the Middle East who once shared the spirit of the American dream where freedom and justice were best characterised are now subjected to the evils of the American nightmare. The United States is blindly supporting and defending Israel, even when it is practising extreme levels of human rights violations, and in the process literally harming the very American interests it claims to be protecting. Anti-American sentiments in the Middle East are rising.

Whenever the entire world body of nations would come close to condemning Israel's illegal actions in the occupied territories, the United States would support Israel and often threaten to veto any resolution that went as far as criticising

the Jewish state. This is absurd and dangerous as anger and helplessness tend to manifest themselves in violent attacks with loss and suffering on both sides.

It is even more ironic, though, that elevated levels of masochism and heightened degrees of absolute tolerance are the symbols of what the U.S. has to put up with and accept in maintaining its close relationship with Israel. In return for America's exorbitant aid, in excess of \$3 billion annually, and massive logistic support for defence, economy and diplomacy to Israel, the American administration is often accused by Jewish organisations of being anti-Semitic, among many other things for that matter. Israel is still involved in spying activities in the U.S. in a manner that is alarming to the National Security Agency and adversely affecting and impeding America's own national and strategic interests. America's present ambassador to Israel is himself a past leader of one of the staunchest Jewish lobby groups in the United States. The CIA identified Israel as one of six foreign countries with a government-led effort to collect U.S. economic secrets. It is of rather irony that an Islamic proverb best describes Israel's behavioural mode: "Beware of the ill-doing of those you have been

good to."

Israel's approach and tactics appear to be academic in nature and rather transparent. Mr. Netanyahu is adopting positional bargaining, where by he elevates demands and puts forward rather radical and firm stances, with the implied message that any negotiation beyond such positions will only make them harder and more radical. When Israel eventually reverts to its initial bottom-line position, it labels this as concessions, demanding equal concessions from the Palestinians in particular and the Arabs in general.

There is almost nothing left for the Palestinians to concede to in reality. The Israeli policy is rather myopic in nature and can only alienate the few remaining moderates in the region and make them even more suspicious of Israel and its true intentions. Tragically, Israel's actions are widening the gap, forcing most Arabs to reject Israel as a partner in peace. It is the hearts and minds of the Arab people that Israel must address and reach as it is they who eventually make and shape peace. Israel has abysmally failed here.

Among recent developments that greatly angered the Arabs was the ruling by the Israeli high court approving the torture of an imprisoned Palestinian. This greatly dwarfed Israel's claim to be the only custodian of democ-

racy and human rights in the Middle East. One would probably ask since when Israel needed legal ruling from the high court to justify its numerous and diverse illegal actions. This was obviously a stunt which reflected negatively on any credibility that Israel tried to instil in its relationship with the Palestinians. The Jewish state is, of course, guilty of many incidences of brutality and injustice since its inception less than fifty years ago. Torturing Palestinians is probably the mildest of Israel's abhorrent behaviour. Torture or not, the will of the Palestinians for freedom and justice can never be stopped.

Mr. Netanyahu is intent on maintaining the idiosyncrasy that Israel can build more settlements. Claim sovereignty over all Jerusalem, prolong the de facto occupation and have its peace and security, but these are the very acts that would nourish extremism and breed new suicide bombers. Accommodation, negotiation, commitment and compromise should rule so that Israelis and Palestinians can have their security and prosperity and can both live in peace.

The writer is currently the managing director of Guiding Principles, a strategic consultancy company. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.



Waste not, want not

By Ali Kassay

FOR THE second year, Jordan Television has launched a water-conservation community-awareness campaign which reminds people of the scarcity of water in our bounteous country and enjoins them to economise in their use of this vital resource. First and foremost, I should start by raising my hat to all involved in this campaign, particularly Jordan's Ministry of Water and to the Canadian International Development Agency that finances the campaign, for their work.

Now seriously. One of the messages starts off with a happy family scene that is interrupted by the water drop which is the mascot of the campaign gasping in alarm as it points out that a pipe has sprung a leak and water is being wasted.

Immediately, the lady of the house fulfils her civic duty by calling the water authority to report the leak, and everyone lives happily ever after. Or do they?

Cynic that I am, my curiosity would not let me rest until I found someone who could tell me what happens after the good citizen makes that phone call. After a long and arduous search, I finally found a friend of mine who went through this experience, which I permit myself to describe, strictly in fulfilment of the journalist's mission to bring the full story to his readers.

So our friend called to report a leaky pipe. That is, she tried to do so, since the hot line was sometimes busy, or else it was allowed to ring without anyone interfering with the telephone's right to express itself freely and without hindrance, in the spirit of the purest democracy.

When eventually the lady got through, she was politely passed from one employee to the other, until she touched base with Abu Mohammad, who promised to come on the following day to inspect the situation. On the morning, Abu Mohammad turned up and fulfilled his promise of inspecting the situation. He looked at the spot from which water was gushing out of the ground and forming rivulets that flowed in the general direction of away, and his sharp deductive mind, reinforced by years of experience, led him to the conclusion which he announced to the lady: "The water pipe is leaking."

Sherlock Holmes, had he been present, would probably have shaken Abu Mohammad's hand warmly and invited him to explain to the amazed Dr. Watson his method of reasoning. But he was not. Instead, Abu Mohammad's audience consisted of an impatient lady who said that she knew this already, and wanted to know what he was planning to do about it. Abu Mohammad knew very well what he ought to do about it. He would call his colleagues to find out whether there were any other complaints in the area which he could inspect, and asked if he could have a cup of tea while he was at it. Beyond this, there was little he could do in the way of repairs since he had come unequipped with tools.

Eventually, this story had a happy conclusion. The family was worried that water may affect the foundations of their house, so they called in a private plumber to repair the pipe at their own expense. Now all they have to worry about is being fined for having tampered with public property without authorisation.

The writer is currently the managing director of Guiding Principles, a strategic consultancy company. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

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King urges Islamists to participate in elections, nation to come out and vote

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He said that the late president had asked him to make moves to restore the occupied Arab lands and finally reach a comprehensive solution.

He reminded his audience that Jordan, Syria and Egypt had accepted U.N. Security Council resolution 242 and the Palestinians followed suit.

Criticising those who he said are trying to distort history and those who opposed the peace treaty with Israel, the King said: "Some voices were heard saying that Jordan will be swallowed up by Israel economically, but now after three years, I ask you did anything of this sort happen? Thank God everything is going the right way, our international borders are recognised for the first time and encroachment on our territory has stopped."

Referring to conditions set by political groups for participating in the elections he said "if the question of peace with Israel is one condition, I say that the peace treaty was approved by both houses of parliament and backed by the people of Jordan and we hope it will serve as a step along the way towards the comprehensive peace we aspire to."

"As to the one-person, one-vote election system, it was endorsed by Parliament and it is not a temporary law," added the King.

Stressing the need for the people to vote in the coming elections, the King said, "We need to have the votes of all people. We want

what is right for all to take their decision and to help establish justice and help in bringing about prosperity and stability and progress."

He said that "the one-person, one-vote system is the best that can suit us under the present circumstances and people who accept this system are welcome to vote, but those who are not convinced, are free in their own decisions. But we hope that people will examine their stand and take the right decision and we hope that the political parties will reassess their own position and realise their own size."

He said "we have achieved a great deal for this country but we aspire to achieve a great deal more and we implore God to help us pursue our march following in the footsteps of our fathers and grandfathers and on the right course of construction so that we can be of help to all Jordanians to enjoy stability, security and peace and to build on our achievements and succeed in their endeavours."

King Hussein referred to the citizens of Ma'an as his brothers and kinsmen with whom he said he had toiled and confronted challenges and difficulties and tackled problems as a united front.

"I consider, all Jordanians like sons, brothers and sisters, and all who had joined our march have been treated in the manner they deserve, but those who chose to differ with us, we waited for them to return to our ranks to join the rest of the Jordanian family in the construction process," added King Hussein.

He said that "Jordanians have lived together like members of a family with our relations characterised with affection, perseverance and patience and I have always considered Jordanian citizens as my own responsibility."

King Hussein reaffirmed his absolute confidence in the Jordanian people and greeted the citizens of Ma'an, the city which he said had served as the initial stage in Jordan's modern history.

Later, King Hussein visited the palace of the late King Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein, founder of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, where he inspected restoration works and inaugurated the national museum housing the late King Abdullah's personal effects and pictures reflecting the establishment of Jordan and its evolution.

The King also visited the Ma'an branch of Muta University and inaugurated the faculty of science and arts. The King was briefed on its activities and programmes by the University President Eid Dahiyat.

King Hussein also inaugurated Princess Basma's new gynaecology, maternity and children ward at Ma'an hospital.

Attending the rally were Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, the King's advisor for Tribal Affairs Hmaid Al Fayez, several Cabinet ministers, deputies from the Ma'an Governorate and former ministers.

China in the slow lane on Internet super-highway

By Richard Ingham
Agence France-Presse

HONG KONG — Its neighbours are racing ahead into cyberspace, laying plans to use the Internet for home shopping, banking and stock transactions, harnessing its powers for education and home entertainment. Left in their wake is China, the supposed super-economy of the next century.

Hobbled by poor infrastructure and a range of restrictions on business and information, China lags pitifully in the race to exploit the technical miracles of the net, business sources say.

Internet corporations interviewed at a trade fair here say providers of computer equipment, software and services eye China and its massive population as potentially the net's juiciest market.

But the frustration lies in that word, "potentially".

"China is not as big as we had hoped," said Niu Bai of Shiva Corp. of Massachusetts, which makes concentrators, a device that helps efficient handling of data for the huge computers that make up the Internet.

"It's going to be huge, but not yet," he said.

"Japan is still the largest market in Asia, and Taiwan, (South) Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore are great. We are forming partnerships and working hard on the China market, but China still represents less than five per cent of our Asian turnover."

Like others at the Hong Kong/China Internet World '97, which ended recently, he cited fundamental difficulties in China, starting with the lack of ISDN lines and

exchanges — the trunk network that lets data move quickly and efficiently around the country.

Then there is the fact that China, for all its great size, remains a tiny market.

In a population of 1.3 billion, sales of personal computers were just two million in 1996, according to estimates made in January by China's Electronics Ministry, which predicted growth of at least 60 per cent in 1997.

Internet subscribers numbered around 150,000 at the end of last year, but could rise to 250,000 by the end of 1997. Some analysts say this figure does not reflect the number of Internet users, which they say is many times higher.

In 1996, China had only 60.58 million telephone users, although the goal is to enable 10 per cent of the total number of households — and all those in urban centres — to have a phone by the turn of the century, through an investment programme worth \$12 billion each year.

This development may sound impressive, but it is risible compared with Singapore, where nearly 10 per cent of the population already uses the Internet; in Hong Kong, where it is eight per cent; or in Taiwan, China's rival, where penetration is expected to reach 14 per cent by 2000.

Then there are the problems of actually doing Internet business in China for service providers. China is irksome in that very few people have a credit card, a prerequisite for ordering goods over the net.

And those wanting to sell computers and Inter-

net equipment to China complain the government has a monopolistic and meddling attitude that discourages newcomers.

"You have to spend lots of money to develop the market," says Robinson Hsu of Versant Communications Inc. of California. "Maybe after five or 10 years you can get some return."

On the other hand, the government's attempt to restrict information flows in China is widely seen as less of a problem.

The Communist authorities control all the "gateways" through which Internet data passes in and out of the country and try to weed out access to foreign news sites, sites run by China's pro-democracy diaspora and "spiritual pollution" such as pornography.

But the curbs have so far had limited success, according to an Internet user in Beijing.

Stephen Cui, vice president for Asia for Cyber-express, a New Jersey-based corporation that sells commercial data and entertainment to Internet subscribers, is optimistic.

The restrictions will either be removed or become redundant, he said.

"In two years, there will be no controls. The Communist government knows that. It can change very quickly. No one imagined that 10 years ago, China would be like it is today," he says.

Agrees Bai: "The (censorship) policy can change. People can become liberal. It's a global trend. China has opened to the world, you can't just shut it down."

Iranian president submits relatively moderate cabinet

(Continued from page 1)

responsible for rebuilding Iran's power network following the devastating 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

Habibollah Bitaraf, a former governor general of Yazd province and deputy energy minister, was named to replace Mr. Zanganeh as energy minister.

Speaker of Parliament Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri, a conservative hardliner who was defeated by moderate cleric Khatami in the May 23 presidential vote, said the legislature would vote on the new president's nominees on August 19.

While no woman was named to the cabinet, Masoumeh Ebtekar, a 36-year-old doctor and university professor, is expected to be

named to the post of vice president in charge of environmental affairs, a job which does not require parliamentary approval.

She would be Iran's first female vice president since the Islamic revolution of 1979. The list of vice presidents is to be released at a later date.

The cabinet nominees have been the subject of open squabbling between left- and right-wing factions as Mr. Khatami, a former culture minister, tries to get his cabinet through parliament, still reeling from the upset loss of its candidate in the presidential election.

The cabinet proposed by Mr. Khatami Tuesday retained several members of the outgoing government

of Mr. Rafsanjani, who stepped down as president after serving the maximum two four-year terms permitted under the constitution.

Ismail Shushtari was retained as justice minister, Issa Kalantari as agriculture minister and Hussein Kamali, a political science graduate of Tehran University, as labor minister.

The most telling sign of the compromise with the conservatives was the choice of Deputy Qorbani Dorri Najafabadi as Intelligence Minister.

Several newspapers said Mr. Khatami had to drop his first choice for the job, Mohammad Mussavi-Khoeni, a radical and former spokesman of the hostage-takers at the U.S. embassy in Tehran, because

of heavy conservative pressure.

Mr. Najafabadi replaces Ali Fallahian, who was implicated by a Berlin court in the murders of four Kurdish dissidents in the German city in 1992, a case which has soured Iran's relations with the European Union.

Ataollah Mohajerani, a moderate who has served as vice president in charge of legal and parliamentary affairs since 1989, was named to head the powerful ministry of culture and Islamic guidance.

A former cultural attaché to Pakistan, Mr. Mohajerani served as deputy prime minister for legal and parliamentary affairs from 1985 to 1989. He has headed the "committee for sup-

porting the Islamic revolution of Palestine" since 1990.

Tehran Deputy Abdullah Nouri, a former interior minister, was named once again to head the interior ministry, which oversees police and internal security forces, in another bow to right-wingers.

Gholam Reza Shafei, who served as minister of cooperatives under Mr. Rafsanjani and is a former deputy minister of mines and metals, was appointed minister of industries in the new government.

Mohammad Reza Aref, holder of a doctorate from Stanford University in the U.S. who has headed Tehran University since 1984, was named minister of communications.

U.S. envoy criticises economic punishment of West Bank, Gaza

(Continued from page 1)

Palestinians by Israel amounted to \$40 million, about 60 per cent of the Palestinian National Authority's (PNA) monthly income.

"The situation is very dangerous, and we are on the verge of collapse. We have no money," said Mr. Alawneh, adding that the self-rule government had to borrow from banks to pay 80,000 employees.

David Bar-Illan, a top aide to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, said Israel had tried for years "to avoid anything that may be constructed as sanctions, but terrorism continued and became worse than ever."

He said Israel refused to hand over the tax money, which he estimated at \$22 million, because it was used to fund the Palestinian police, and some senior

police had been involved in planning attacks on Israel.

"We feel that it is a little ridiculous to hand over money to the very same police force that is engaged in terrorism," said Mr. Bar-Illan.

Israel has demanded the trial of Palestinian police commissioner Ghazi Jabali after claiming he was involved in sending a squad of police to ambush Israelis in the West Bank.

There were signs of progress in Mr. Ross' efforts to restore security cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians, which has been suspended since March when Israel started a Jewish settlement Arab east Jerusalem.

Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai indicated Israel would ease the travel ban and economic sanctions if the Palestinians cracked down on militants.

Despite reports that Mr. Arafat had agreed to renewed security cooperation, Mr. Bar-Illan said there had been no progress yet on improving the security situation.

"What Ross did was a very good first step. The question is whether it will be followed up by other steps. If not, it is meaningless," Mr. Bar-Illan told the Associated Press.

Israel demanded the arrest of 230 Palestinian militants, the dismantling of political factions and the uprooting of the infrastructure of Hamas. U.S. sources said Mr. Ross warned Mr. Arafat about the need to confiscate weapons and arrest anyone who threaten to carry out terror attacks. But the American view of what needed to be done was reportedly less drastic than Israel's.

Palestinian officials indicated it was prema-

ture to say whether Mr. Ross would be able to break the impasse and resume peace talks.

"It's too early to say whether it is a successful shuttle or not," said Saeb Erekat, the chief Palestinian negotiator. "[Mr. Ross] came to deal with security issues. And we told him that the Palestinian security as important as Israeli security."

His remarks indicated that the gap between the two sides was still wide, and that the Palestinians wanted to see Mr. Ross address political issues such as Jewish settlement building, which they view as the cause of the current crisis.

"We told him you cannot deal with one issue and ignore the other issues," Mr. Erekat said on the Voice of Palestine.

Hamas says military wing responsible for bombing

(Continued from page 1)

Oslo peace agreement, which the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has signed with Israel.

"We will fight the Oslo agreement with political and democratic means and without entering into conflict with the Palestinian Authority, which is a red line that we will not cross," Mr. Goshbeh said.

He added that his group was ready to enter into dialogue with the PNA, but emphasised that the PNA has to adopt several conditions before the talks with Hamas start, such as releasing the group's detainees from PNA jails and putting an end to security coordination with Israel.

The Hamas spokesman also said that his group was ready to take part in municipal elections in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip "if certain requirements are met to ensure honest and fair polls" for more than three million Palestinians living there.

He called upon Palestinian President Yasser Arafat not to "succumb" to Israeli and American pressure by cracking down against Hamas activists in the Palestinian territories "which is aimed at striking at (Palestinian) national unity."

Mr. Goshbeh said that during the meeting between President Arafat and Hamas politburo member Musa Abu Marzook, which took

place last week, was merely "a social encounter" and denied that the two discussed the Hamas-PNA relationship nor the Jerusalem blasts.

He added that President Arafat's meeting with Mr. Abu Marzook, which lasted for one hour, was to "congratulate Mr. Abu Marzook on his release from a U.S. jail."

Mr. Abu Marzook was discharged last May from a New York jail after being accused of "terrorist" activities.

In reports published Tuesday, Mr. Abu Marzook called upon the Palestinians to turn the lives of Jewish settlers into hell.

"Those spiteful settlers in Hebron and other cities of

our occupied Palestinian lands are receiving full support and encouragement from this Israeli government and previous governments," Mr. Abu Marzook told the Islamic magazine Al Islah in the United Arab Emirates.

"We call on our people in Palestine to chase these herds of settlers and turn their lives into intolerable hell," he said.

"We call on all Palestinian people, Muslims and Christians, to join hands in responding to the Zionist crimes, which will be stopped only by decisive action," the AFP quoted Mr. Abu Marzook as saying to the UAE-based magazine.

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LOVE ALL SERVE ALL... SAVE THE PLANET

Public shareholding companies begin issuing mid-year financial results

By Samir Ghawi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Since last month, public shareholding companies have been preparing their financial statements and reports as of June 30, 1997 and submitting them to the Amman Financial Market (AFM) as required by the law.

So far, the AFM has received nearly 25 financial statements which were made available to the Jordan Times and summarised as shown below:

The Arab Chemical Detergents Industries Company

Total sales posted by the company during the first half of this year amounted to JD4.5 million. Taking into account JD3.6 million in operational costs, the company's gross profit stood at JD0.9 million. However, the net profit went down further to JD0.55 million when administrative, selling and general expenses were deducted.

The company's fixed assets at the end of June 1997 totalled JD1.1 million. Inventories of goods and raw materials amounted to JD1.8 million as current liabilities were nearly JD2 million.

The General Investment Company

Of JD2.9 million in total sales, the company paid

around JD1 million in sales tax and generated a JD1.1 million gross profit. This profit declined to JD950,000 after subtracting various expenses.

The company's current assets at the end of the first half of this year stood at JD3.2 million of which JD1.2 million were inventories, JD1.1 million receivable and JD0.5 million in cash.

Investments in subsidiaries and shares of other companies amounted to JD2.6 million in addition to fixed assets valued at JD4.9 million.

Current liabilities totalled JD0.8 million and shareholders' equity closed the first half period at about JD10 million.

The Jordan Rockwool Industries Company

The company emerged from the JD51,273 loss posted during the first half of last year to post a small JD5,515 profit on sales amounting to JD728,962 compared to JD544,133 of sales in the first half of 1996.

Although current assets declined slightly from JD2.4 million to JD2.3 million, the company had around JD650,000 in cash liquidity in addition to inventories amounting to JD760,000. Total receivables amounted to JD800,000.

Current liabilities and shareholders' equity were JD408,467 (JD529,930 in June 96) and JD3.4 million (JD3.5 million).

The Universal Chemical Industries Company

Of the JD2.1 million in total sales, the company's exports amounted to JD1.4 million, but the amount was below the JD3.7 million in total sales posted during the first half of last year.

Current assets totalled JD3.0 million of which JD1.7 million were receivables and JD0.8 million the value of goods, raw materials and spare parts. Current assets at the end of June 1996 stood at JD2.8 million.

The company's fixed assets were valued at JD721,557. Payables and shareholders' equity amounted to JD0.76 million and JD2.9 million respectively.

The Arab Press Works Company

The company posted a small JD5,689 operational loss as costs amounted to JD326,027 whereas earnings were JD320,338. However, with the addition of administrative, selling and general expenses in addition to depreciation, the loss increased to JD148,018 during the first half of this year.

The company's net fixed assets were valued at JD5.3 million. Current assets totalled JD0.9 million of which JD0.55 million were receivables.

On the liability side, the company carried a JD2 million short-term loan. As to the shareholders' equity, the amount stood at JD2.7 million although the company has a JD4.0 million registered capital of which only JD2.8 million is fully paid.

The Unified Company for Organising Land Transport

The main assets of the company were concentrated in cash, receivables and investments as they totalled JD4.8 million, JD1 million and JD1.1 million respectively.

In addition the company's balance sheet includes JD0.7 million of fixed assets and about JD0.5 million of payments on work in progress.

The company repaid JD1 million of bank loans that showed in the 1996 balance sheet but as of June 30, 1997 the company's current liabilities included payables of around JD1.2 million. Shareholders' equity totalled about JD7.0 million.

The profit and loss statement showed net profit at JD0.69 million, a few thousand dinars more than the net profit posted in mid-year 1996.

Contributing to the net profit were JD0.4 million from operation, JD0.3 million from bank interest and returns on investments. During the first half of 1996, operational profit amounted to JD0.5 million and income from interest and other investment returns were JD0.2 million.

(To be continued tomorrow)

Daily Beat
A review of news from the Arabic press

Ministry detects four cases of tax evasion daily

**** DESPITE PROVIDING** tax incentives, there are still many attempts of tax evasion, Finance Minister Suleiman Hafez said in a lecture this week. "We detect between four to five cases of tax evasion at the ministry each day," he asserted.

The minister confirmed that the government will lower the maximum ceiling of customs duties from 40 per cent to 30 per cent from the beginning of 1998. He said that as customs duties are reduced the more emphasis will be given to the sales tax. Noting that the estimate in the 1997 budget is to collect at least JD372 million in sales tax, the minister described the sales tax as the first step towards applying the value added tax.

Mr. Hafez indicated that the ministry has a plan to implement this concept of tax on stages. He stressed that the ministry will continue to rely on local financial resources to cover recurrent and capital expenditure and to provide subsidies to the deserving needy people.

Speaking on the debt burden, Mr. Hafez revealed that foreign debt at present stands at \$6.7 billion which, he said, is still high. "It is annoying and needs great effort," he added noting that in addition to the debt burden, Jordan suffers from limited resources and high unemployment.

He indicated that as a result of the high credibility of the economic adjustment programme being pursued, the Kingdom has become eligible to seek commercial borrowing from world financial centres. "Such a borrowing has not been possible since 1989 when the country did not obtain outside loans," the minister said.

"The International Monetary Fund has imposed on Jordan conditions not to take any loans that do not have a minimum 35 per cent grants so as to repay 65 per cent of the total loan," Mr. Hafez told his audience.

Other topics mentioned by the minister were:

- The decision of raise water charges will be implemented from Oct. 1 but the majority of the people will not be affected by the higher cost.
- The budget deficit will be reduced to 3.1 per cent of the gross domestic product this year.
- The German government will cancel DM40 million of Jordanian debt this year.
- The allocations for administrative development in the public sector will be reconsidered in this year's budget.
- There will be independent budgets for the governorates from this year. The budgets will include recurrent and capital spending and the governor and the executive council will be considered as a mini-government in the governorate (Al Aswaq).

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

MYNEE

WULAF

LUDSON

WOTOWK

Print answer here: THE

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ANNUL PLUSH LUNACY JACKET

Answer: Where the soldier caught forty winks — ON HIS "NAP" SACK

Flight 001, descend to 5000 feet, wind at 20 knots out of the southwest, visibility...

WHAT THE TOWER GIVES A PILOT BEFORE LANDING.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: THE

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ANNUL PLUSH LUNACY JACKET

Answer: Where the soldier caught forty winks — ON HIS "NAP" SACK

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHEIKH SAUD											
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 12/08/1997											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
298.000	219.000	ARAB BANK	13.5	1.37	2	340	100260	294.25	293.00	1.25	
2.340	1.680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8	0.00	21	8430	17307	2.05	2.05	-	
5.800	4.100	CHINO AMMAN BANK	11.3	2.75	1	5000	5450	5.45	5.45	-	
3.600	2.760	BANK OF JORDAN	6.4	0.00	2	4700	14335	3.05	3.05	-	
1.210	.880	MID. EAST INV. BK.	59.1	0.00	5	40250	37425	.94	.90	-.04	
2.480	2.150	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.7	7.16	34	20850	48901	2.21	2.16	-.05	
5.200	4.300	TUE HOUSING BK.	12.3	4.04	3	1400	6195	4.88	4.80	-.08	
1.050	.760	JOR. CULP BANK	4.7	8.86	8	16440	12986	.75	.75	-	
3.870	3.450	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	17.3	0.00	2	5000	18000	3.55	3.60	-.05	
4.050	3.480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	15.4	1.09	8	1560	6589	3.85	3.88	-.03	
1.760	1.110	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	P	0.00	1	1600	2048	1.28	1.28	-	
2.460	1.000	BEIT-AL-HAL (BEITHA)	.7	14.15	3	650	689	1.98	1.06	-.02	
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 216.19	CHNG: -0.38	91	102358	270746				
2.260	1.590	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	4.6	12.20	4	650	1071	1.64	1.64	-	
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 113.54	CHNG: 0.00	4	650	1071				
1.830	1.500	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.0	6.06	23	13786	22748	1.66	1.65	-.01	
1.540	1.320	IRBID ELECTRICITY	8.8	7.82	5	10200	14989	1.42	1.47	-.05	
3.050	2.150	SHIPPING LINES	16.7	4.53	4	1500	4315	2.88	2.87	-.01	
1.550	.930	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	24	30600	42258	1.39	1.39	-	
1.010	.820	REAL ESTATE INVR.	12.6	0.00	11	6900	6195	.89	.89	-	
.810	.480	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	28.2	0.00	2	900	495	.55	.55	-	
1.890	1.150	MID. EAST HOTELS	20.1	0.00	21	22561	29677	1.26	1.32	-.06	
3.720	2.800	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	15.4	0.00	4	1560	6589	3.05	3.07	-.02	
1.220	.930	ZARQA ZONATION	9	0.00	7	14000	13660	.98	.99	-.01	
2.230	1.630	UNITED CO.	8.6	6.08	32	18400	33479	1.76	1.81	-.05	
1.010	.640	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	1	150	101	.67	.67	-	
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 110.30	CHNG: +0.64	135	120659	173270				
4.430	3.220	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	26.9	2.76	37	10364	41260	3.97	3.99	-.02	
4.140	2.750	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	11.0	1.53	3	1000	11880	3.96	3.96	-	
7.050	5.100	ARAB POTASH CO.	14.5	3.20	2	2500	15700	6.35	6.25	1.10	
10.250	9.040	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.7	8.88	24	4293	42916	9.98	10.01	-.03	
3.260	1.650	INDUSTRIAL COM. MGR.	9	0.00	3	974	1658	1.72	1.73	-.01	
7.150	5.800	JOR. WORSTED MILLS	9.5	1.39	1	100	590	5.90	5.90	-	
4.160	3.040	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	11.2	4.93	20	4966	20137	4.05	4.06	-.01	
5.650	4.200	DAR ALDAMA DV. INV.	13.0	4.72	4	40000	21200	5.30	5.30	-	
1.270	.510	INTERVED. PETRO. CHEM.	9.7	0.00	8	11950	8497	.46	.46	-	
-1.310	-1.000	ARAB PAPER CON. TRD.	32.4	0.00	25	20250	21294	1.03	1.06	-.03	
1.520	.810	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	5	2150	1710	.81	.80	-.01	
1.270	.510	INTERVED. PETRO. CHEM.	9.7	0.00	8	11950	8497	.46	.46	-	
.980	.530	JOR. ROCKWOOL INDS.	9	0.00	13	10300	7077	.66	.69	-.03	
3.000	2.130	NATL. CABLE WIRE. MFG.	36.6	0.00	1	500	1140	2.33	2.28	-.05	
.920	.530	JOR. SULPHO-CHEM	9	0.00	4	5250	3308	.60	.63	-.03	
1.670	1.120	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	17.5	5.11	3	150	1025	1.34	1.37	-.03	
2.000	1.080	UNIV. TECH. INDS.	9	.21	19	7250	9081	1.20	1.24	-.04	
1.510	.990	JOR. INDS. RESOURCES	13.9	9.71	22	9800	10151	1.03	1.03	-	
1.620	1.300	NATL. CHLORINE	15.0	4.40	23	10300	16379	1.56	1.59	-.03	
1.810	.810	JOR. NEW CHLOR. CO.	15.4	0.00	21	12700	12818	.58	.57	-.01	
2.090	1.340	INTL. SAY READY WEAR	56.0	0.00	6	6600	10398	1.59	1.59	-	
1.330	1.080	INTL. TOBACCO	6.3	0.00	6	4150	4773	1.15	1.15	-	
1.240	.860	UNION CH. & VEG.	43.6	0.00	15	11900	12340	.95	.96	-.01	
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 123.29	CHNG: -0.48	297	202497	472587				
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 165.78	CHNG: -0.36	527	426164	917673				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 12/08/1997											
.630	.350	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	6	3500	1233	.36	.35	-.01	
.620	.370	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	12	13500	5535	.41	.41	-	
.950	.720	AL-SHARQ INV. CO.	9	0.00	6	20950	18327	.87	.87	-	
.950	.610	AL-DAMRIYAH 751	65.5	0.00	12	46400	19952	.68	.68	-	
.570	.380	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	44.9	0.00	2	500	195	.39	.39	-	
.750	.400	NATL. MULT. ENG. NAMICO	9	0.00	24	19150	9384	.49	.49	-	
.820	.710	JORDAN STEEL	34.8	6.49	22	33100	25384	.75	.77	-.02	
.570	.320	INDOS. ENO.	9	0.00	7	10000	3100	.34	.33	-.01	
.860	.730	INDOS. CERAMIC	19.4	0.00	2	800	592	.73	.74	-.01	
.820	.590	NATL. POULTRY	8	0.00	8	5153	3219	.64	.64	-	
1.020	.730	NAT. ALUMINIUM 751	9	0.00	9	14600	7340	.75	.75	-	
1.020	.720	ARAB INT. FOOD FACT.	37.1	0.00	11	63000	48498	.76	.77	-.01	
.860	.590	MID. EAST COMPLEX	7.9	15.63	1	250	160	.63	.64	-.01	
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 122	CHNG: 0.00	122	230903	143017				

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Jordan Times

Wihdat prepare for Arab Cup Winners' Cup

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

THE KINGDOM'S soccer champions Al Wihdat Wednesday arrive in Ismailia, Egypt, where the Arab Cup Winners' Cup opens Friday with eight teams taking part.

Al Wihdat are expected to have ended their week-long intense training camp in Alexandria where they also had two friendly matches in preparation for the August 15-25 event.

Al Wihdat's training camp at Alexandria's Naval Academy will cost about JD10,000 and comes amid the team's preparations to retain their Premier League title under new Iraqi coach Anwar Jassam who previously trained the Iraqi national teams.

Al Wihdat will be playing in Group 2 alongside Saudi Arabia's Al Shabab, Kuwait's Al Arabi and Algeria's Mawloudieh.

Group 1 includes Egypt's Al Ismaili, Qatar's Al Itihad.

Balata of Palestine and Libya's Al Ahli.

The draw has placed Al Wihdat in the relatively tougher group especially in their opening match against Al Shabab which is led by a Brazilian coach and includes top Saudi striker Saeed Oweiran.

However, the Saudi team will be missing professional players like Salem Dossari and Fahd Mohallal who are on duty with their national team preparing for the second round of the Asian World Cup qualifiers.

Al Ismaili and Al Ahli play the opening match Friday. Al Wihdat will play Al Shabab in their first match Saturday and will next play Algeria's Mawloudieh Aug. 19 and Kuwait's Al Arabi Aug. 21.

The semifinals will be played Aug. 23 and the final Aug. 25.

The referees for the tournament include Omar Bashtawi of Jordan, Hassan Ali of Egypt, Karim Dahou of Algeria, Mohammad Shilmi of Libya, Nabil Ayyad of Lebanon, Yousef Aqili of Saudi Arabia and Jassem Khouri of Qatar.

Ravanelli says British press are out to get him

TURIN (AFP) — Middlesbrough's Fabrizio Ravanelli on Tuesday denied reports of a fight with teammate Curtis Fleming, and claimed he was the victim of a British press smear campaign.

Ravanelli said he feared that the tabloid claim, which was subsequently picked up by the press in Italy, could cost him his place in Cesare Maldini's national team.

"After the article published in the Sunday Mirror, and reported by the Italian press — who added different interpretations — my image has suffered a major blow," Ravanelli said.

"My fear is that I won't be picked for the national side again."

Cesare Maldini will certainly have read the newspapers and who knows what he will think of me now?"

"I'm already playing in a lower division, and now there's this story of a fight with a teammate..."

Ravanelli broke his silence in a rare telephone interview with the Tuttosport newspaper based in Turin, the same city as his former club Juventus.

He went on: "It's not the first time that the British press have attacked me."

"I'll never forget how the 'News of the World'...

who I gave an exclusive interview to, completely twisted my comments when Italy won their world Cup qualifier at Wembley.

"It was all completely invented."

"And then there was the story of the unpaid bill for the portable telephone: It was all gratuitous spite. And that's why I decided to keep my mouth shut; not just to British journalists, but also to Italians."

As for the alleged punch-up with Fleming, Ravanelli insisted the exchange was a verbal one, and did not involve a fistfight.

"Let's be honest, who hasn't had words with a colleague at work?" asked the Italian. "Surely that's only normal?"

"Fleming and I traded insults, we told each other where to go, and things were a bit irritable on the pitch."

"But what I want to make clear is that I haven't changed my career: I'm a footballer by profession, not a boxer."

"I'll say it again, I've become the target for a certain part of the press. The 'Paparazzi' follow me around, for example, just to see if I say something to a young woman so that they can take a photo and rush off and show it to my wife."

"It's as if by scoring a lot of goals I've made people envious," he said. "I scored 31 in all last season and I want to score as many again this time."

As for the striker's late arrival for pre-season training, Ravanelli explained: "My teammates shouldn't get angry if I was late getting to Middlesbrough and missed the first part of training."

"I had the manager's permission, because of the negotiations that were underway for my transfer to Everton, which then fell through. But I didn't sit around and do nothing."

"I continued to work out on my own, and I was scrupulous about it: I'm a professional. By the time I returned to Middlesbrough, I'd done twice as much preparation as they had."

Despite Ravanelli's return to the English first division club, speculation remains rife that the striker will be moving in the weeks ahead, possibly to Germany, where Borussia Dortmund have indicated interest.

Ali, Holyfield enter ring for charity

LOUISVILLE (AFP) — Former world heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali and reigning king Evander Holyfield will be among fighters climbing into the ring for charity here on September 20.

Ali and Holyfield will enter the ring against anyone for three friendly one-minute rounds with all donations going to charity. But the bidding starts at \$50,000.

The event will be here at Freedom Hall at the end of the week-long Ali Cup international amateur boxing challenge, the first international invitational boxing tournament, other than the Olympics, in a U.S. city.

Others entering the ring for charity include Jimmy Ellis, Jose Torres, Mark Breland, Ken Norton, Paul Gonzales, Ernie Turrell and David Reid.

"No one will get hurt, and everyone will have a lot of fun," said Gary Toney, president of USA Boxing. "Not too many people have a chance to step up in the ring with Muhammad Ali or Evander Holyfield and walk away smiling."

Ninth seed Andrei Medvedev of the Ukraine defeated qualifier Nir Weigreen of Israel 6-3, 6-3 without facing a break point and 11th seed Greg Rusedski of Britain ousted Dutch qualifier Peter Wessels 6-3, 6-2 in 44 minutes.

Defending champion Alex O'Brien of the United States beat wild card entry Ivan Ljubicic of Croatia 6-3, 6-1, and 16th seed Jan Siemerink of the Netherlands rallied to beat Uzbekistan's Oleg Ogorodov 7-6 (7/1), 4-6, 6-1.

India's Leander Paes often wins at doubles, but prefers singles.

He came close to winning at singles too when he faced American David Wheaton, but dropped his first round match 6-3, 6-7(6-8), 6-3.

Just one break decided it in the third set, when the American broke his serve to lead 5-3. Before that, after five breaks of serve in the first set and none in the second, Paes fought back from 0-4 and match point down to claim the tiebreak

American swimmers rally for five out of 8 golds

FUKUOKA (AP) — Jenny Thompson collected her 14th and 15th career Pan Pacific golds as American swimmers triumphed in five of eight events Monday, second day of the biennial championships.

Australia added three more to the five golds it won on Sunday, tying the U.S. team at eight gold medals overall.

Host Japan and Costa Rica each have won one gold.

Thompson, a five-time Olympic gold winner, edged 1996 Olympic gold medalist and world record-holder Le Jingyi of China by .04 seconds in the 100-meter freestyle.

Thompson, of Stanford, California, led throughout and won in 54.82 seconds, a meet record. Le finished in 54.86, well off the world mark of 54.01 she set in the World Championships in Rome in 1994.

Le, 22, is among only five swimmers China sent to Fukuoka. Team officials explained that China is in the midst of a training program for the World Championships in Australia next January.

"I felt good in the race and I was in the zone. I missed my turn, but my second 50 was the difference," said the 24-year-old Thompson, who is compet-

ing in her fifth Pan Pacific's.

"I was pretty excited to beat (Le). I know she's a world record-holder and always is really fast. I was excited to race her and get that high-quality competition."

About an hour after her 100-meter race, Thompson anchored the victorious American team in the 4 x 200-meter freestyle relay.

Lindsay Benko of Los Angeles and Ashley Whitney and Jamie Cail, both of Jacksonville, Florida, also swam in the quartet that edged Canada, winning in 8 minutes, 7.82 seconds. The Canadians, anchored by Joanne Malar, was timed in 8:08.85.

In the women's 100-meter breaststroke, Australian Samantha Riley spurted ahead of 1996 Olympic gold medalist and world record-holder Penny Heyns of South Africa.

Riley, bronze medalist at the Olympics in Atlanta, was never seriously threatened as she finished in 1:07.81, a meet record.

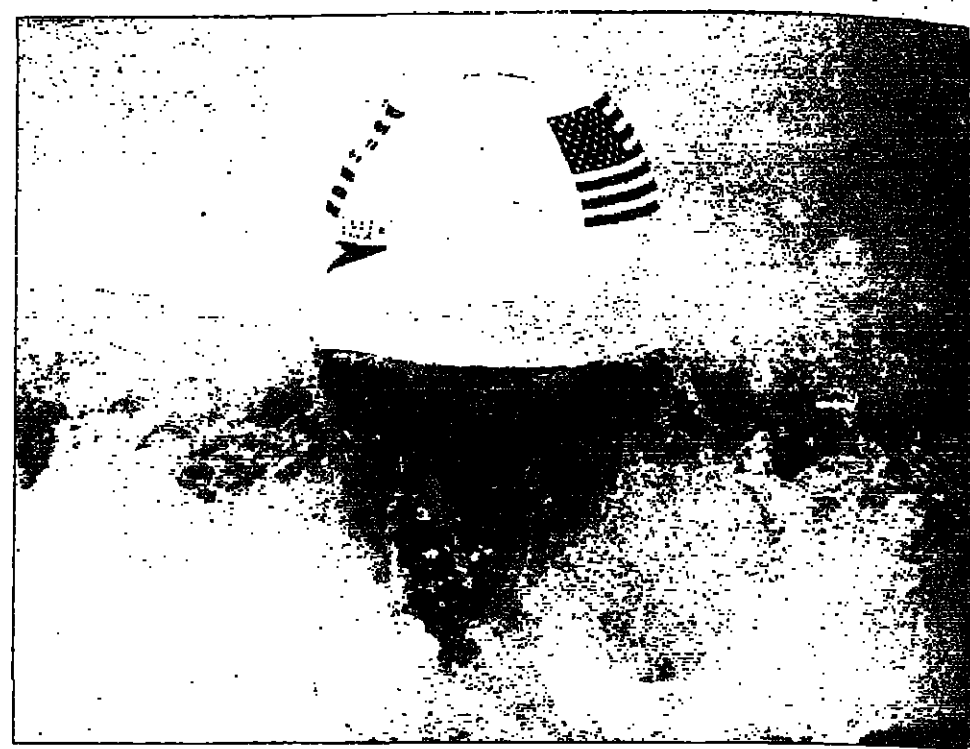
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Australian freestyle specialist Michael Klim edged American Neil Walker by a stroke in an upset victory in the 100-meter men's race, becoming another double gold medalist in Fukuoka.

Walker, of Austin Texas, was ahead most of the race but Klim pulled ahead in the final 15 metres and won in 49.46. Walker finished in 49.57.

The U.S. team in the 4 x 200-metre freestyle relay, anchored by Josh Davis of Austin Texas, also triumphed, beating Australia in 7:19.99, a meet record and the second fastest time ever for American relay teams.

Nearly 400 swimmers from 22 countries and regions are competing in the four-day meet.



Neil Walker of the United States races during the men's 100m butterfly heat in the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships in Fukuoka, southwestern Japan August 12. Walker clocked a new game record of 53.04 seconds, the best time in the heats, to advance to the final (Reuters photo)

Pan Pacific Championships medal standings

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
USA	13	12	13	38
Australia	9	5	4	18
Japan	2	1	1	4
Costa Rica	2	0	0	2
Canada	0	5	3	8
China	0	2	1	3
South Africa	0	1	0	1
New Zealand	0	0	3	3
Puerto Rico	0	0	1	1

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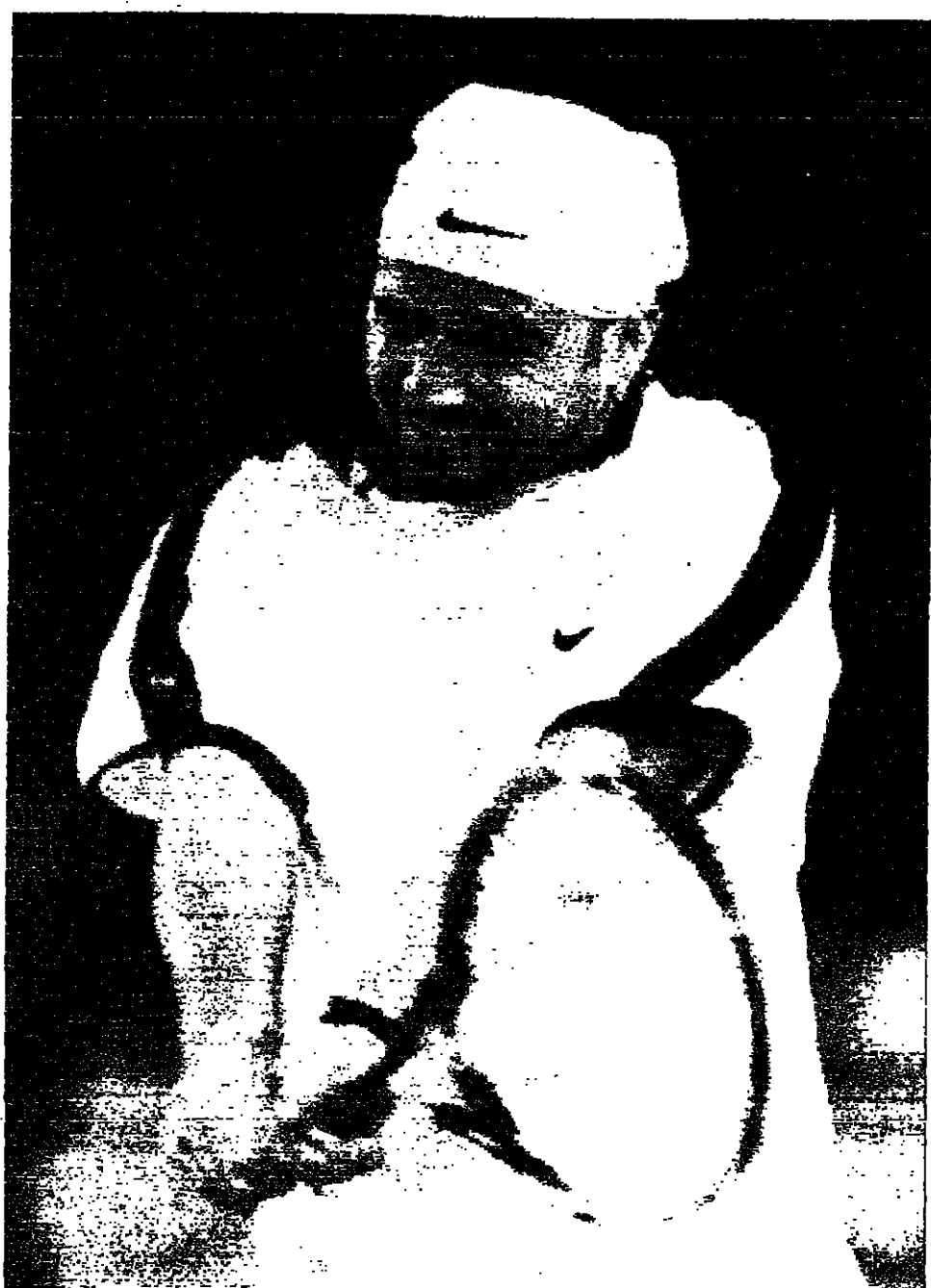
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Andre Agassi

Agassi ends 3-month win drought

INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) — Former World No. 1 Andre Agassi snapped a losing streak of more than three months, beating Italian Davide Sanguinetti 6-2, 4-6, 6-4 here Monday at the ATP RCA championships.

The 14th seed, now down to a world ranking of 74, ended a horror show of seven consecutive first-match losses this year on the ATP Tour with his win over the World No. 93, playing his first match of the year on hardcourt.

"You've got to start somewhere," Agassi said. "It's nice not to have another setback. How I deal with the next match is the next matter. I don't want to make too much of it."

Against Sanguinetti, Agassi was broken in the first set for 1-2, but lifted his game to break straight back against the 24-year-old Italian at the one million-

dollar event.

"Agassi can play good tennis anytime," he said. "(But) I'm a little disappointed that I lost."

The American dropped a second set containing five breaks and recovered from 0-3 down in the third to win in one hour, 55 minutes.

Agassi now stands 6-9 in a 1997 season that has been interrupted by wrist injury problems which kept him out of the French Open and Wimbledon.

Agassi's victory completed a perfect day for the four seeds on court.

Swedes Jonas Bjorkman and Magnus Larsson also advanced, as did South African Wayne Ferreira, who managed a 6-4, 6-3 victory over Australian qualifier Michael Tebbutt.

Ninth seed Bjorkman dispatched Australian Luke Smith, who played college tennis in the U.S., but lost by a score of 6-2, 7-6 (7/4).

Larsson, the No. 16, won 51 points to just 34 for Canadian opponent Daniel Nestor in a 6-4, 6-1 rout.

Ferreira, seeded 10th, has been troubled by a right ankle injury for weeks.

In the absence of the injured Boris Becker, German hopes were reduced to zero as Tommy Haas, Bernd Karbacher and Alex Radulescu all went out in the first round.

Haas was beaten by American Mark Merklein 3-6, 6-1, 6-3. Steve Campbell of the U.S. beat Karbacher 6-4, 4-6, 6-2; south African Grant Stafford accounted for Radulescu 6-4, 7-5.

Czech Martin Damm eliminated Frenchman Jerome Golmard, 6-1, 6-1, but Lionel Roux of France took a revenge victory for his nation over Razvan Sabau of Romania, 6-1, 6-2.

Pagliuca gives Brazil a reminder

MILAN (AFP) — Inter Milan goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca sent Brazil a friendly reminder on Tuesday — "Ronaldo may be important, but remember who pays his wages."

Ronaldo, currently in Asia with the Brazilian national squad, will be wanted by both teams next season — as Inter try to win the Italian League and Brazil prepare for the World Cup finals.

Pagliuca said: "I'd rather he travelled as little as possible. I realise that, for Brazil, Ronaldo is just too important."

"But it's only fair that Inter have him for the big matches, because those are the ones that decide the championship."

"And then you have to remember that it's President Massimo Moratti who pays his wages."

"As for us, his teammates, we'll accept things because we know that he's a sensible lad and he knows what he's got to do."

Ronaldo stands to miss up to seven of Inter's 34 League matches next season — including the derby against AC Milan in November and a home game against champions Juventus in December.

Pagliuca also warned Ronaldo that life in the Serie A would be tougher than the Spanish League

with Barcelona.

"I know he's got skills that are way beyond those of all the other strikers in Italy," he said, "but it's going to be very difficult for him to continue to score goals as he has done up till now."

"Italian defenders are the best in the world and so are the goalkeepers," added Pagliuca, who was beaten once by the 20-year-old during the Tournoi de France.

The Brazilian ace, however, is continuing to repay

Inter after his world record \$27 million move from Barcelona, with the Italian club selling nearly 35,000 of Ronaldo's team shirts — worth nearly four billion lira (\$2.2 million) — in just 10 days.

Inter are also enjoying record sales of season tickets thanks to Ronaldo's arrival — with 40,000 sold already, worth 20 billion lira (\$11 million), and a final target of 50,000 by the time the season starts on August 31.

World Athletics Championships leave question mark over Athens bid

ATHENS (AFP) — Greeks hoped that hosting the World Athletics Championships in Athens would show the world that the city which gave birth to the Olympic movement is ready to hold the 2004 Olympic Games.

Instead, squabbles throughout the championships — which ended on Sunday — have resulted in recriminations and a large question mark about Athens' candidacy.

International Amateur Athletic Federation chief Primo Nebiolo said on Monday that the championships would have been an organisational "tragedy" but for the intervention of IAAF officials.

Nebiolo criticised the Greek organisers for failing to promote the event after poor crowds marred the opening days, and told the Greek television channel Mega: "The organising team wasn't up to much, we found it mediocre."

The Greek press was Tuesday in a ferment over Nebiolo's criticism.

"Nebiolo frenzy against Greece" ran the headline in the pro-government newspaper Ta Nea, while the daily Eleftherotipia accused Nebiolo of starting "a new war".

Ethnos, a centre-right daily, was even more personal, calling Nebiolo "the mafioso of athletics" and saying he had thrown off his mask.

Nebiolo's criticism of Athens' Olympic bid is not surprising. He is one of the prime movers behind a rival bid; that of his home city of Rome.

Athens and Rome are considered the front runners in a race against Stockholm, Cape Town and Buenos Aires for the right to host the 2004 Games. The International Olympic Committee will make its decision in Lausanne on September 5.

Nebiolo was anxious for the World Championships to be a success in order to boost the image of the IAAF, but is now claiming any success was due to his officials, rather than those of the Athens organisers.

The championships would have been a "tragedy" if the IAAF hadn't stepped in to remedy the situation, he said, adding that the Olympic Games "can't resolve Greece's problems."

He cited economic and political problems such as relations with Macedonia and Cyprus and the European Union Maastricht criteria, which

Greece is trying to meet.

Evangelos Savramis, the head of the World Championships organising committee, joined in the mud-slinging, saying: "The only thing Mr. Nebiolo did was to continually create problems."

Savramis firmly put the blame for poor crowds on the first few days in Athens on the IAAF, saying that Nebiolo refused to allow local organisers to put the event back a month despite it falling in the middle of the traditional Greek holiday period.

Andreas Fouras, the Greek secretary of state for sports, weighed in with criticism of Nebiolo, saying: "I won't disguise that I am very much ill at ease with his attitude."

Nebiolo realises the furor he has created, saying: "The situation of the bidding cities is becoming a fire."

Nebiolo's criticisms may, or may not, hold great sway over IOC voters the next few weeks. It remains to be seen whether the row over the athletics championships, which many neutral observers felt were well run, has fatally damaged Athens' bid.

Schumacher takes it easy at Monza

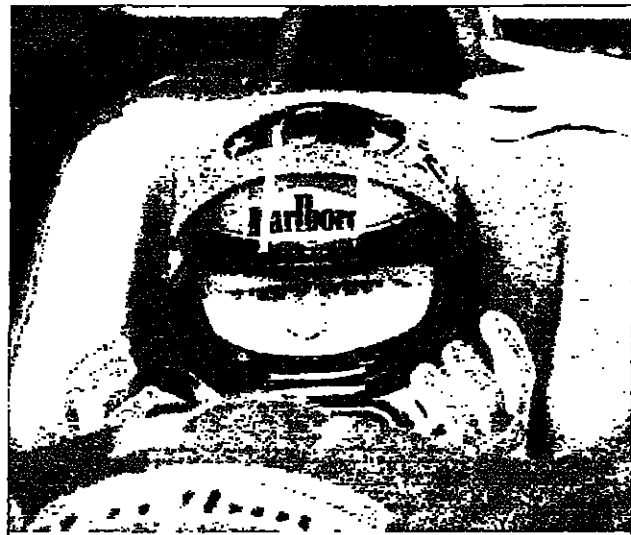
MONZA, Italy (AFP) — Michael Schumacher was putting his Ferrari through its paces here on Tuesday as the Italian team tried to recover from their Hungarian Grand Prix defeat.

Schumacher was trying out the new 046/2 engine which Ferrari are now pinning their hopes on after Jacques Villeneuve slashed his lead in the Driver's Championship to three points on Sunday.

The former two-time world champion limited his outing to 12 laps in the opening session here as Ferrari engineers worked on the set-up of the car — which was due to simulate a Grand Prix later in the day.

The 046/2 engine had powered Schumacher to victory in its first outing at the French Grand Prix, but was then temporarily shelved after fears over reliability.

Schumacher's best time



Michael Schumacher

in Tuesday's first session was a modest 1min 27.562sec, while Williams rival Heinz-Harald Frentzen, who is also here for two days of testing, managed 1:26.060 during his 41 laps.

Jean-Christophe Bouil-

lon, the Williams test driver, clocked 1:26.732 (14 laps) and Jan Magnussen 1:26.790 (36) in a Stewart-Ford.

The Monza Circuit will host the Italian Grand Prix on September 7.

Bayer Leverkusen have tough task

BONN (AFP) — Bayer Leverkusen have been handed the toughest assignment in the opening round of the German Cup.

Leverkusen, last season's runners-up in the Bundesliga, must travel to the Baltic coast to play Hansa Rostock, the only first-round match-up which features first division clubs against each other.

Leverkusen would be strong favourites to beat Rostock, a team which barely averted relegation last season, if it weren't for the strains of their European Champions' League qualification match on Wednesday night which will be played Wednesday evening against Dynamo Tblisi.

Borussia Dortmund coach Nevio Scala will have six fewer players to choose from for Borussia's match on Thursday against the amateurs from the seaside resort of Warnemuende, just down the road from Rostock. Six first-team squad members are injured.

The only other first divi-

sion side not to have an amateur club as their first-round opposition are Schalke, who will meet FSV Zwickau from the second division on Thursday evening.

Zwickau, along with the other east German clubs Chemnitz, Leipzig and Carl Zeiss Jena, have been ordered to play their matches Thursday to separate them from the 10th anniversary of Nazi leader Rudolf Hess's death — which falls on Sunday.

The occasion often provokes violent clashes between extreme left and right wing radicals and German police fear football matches could be a rallying point.

Libero Lothar Mathaus will miss Bayern Munich's match against the small Bavarian amateur club DJK Waldberg on Friday after undergoing a minor operation to remove a painful lump from the back of his head.

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Bashir meets Mandela to discuss Sudanese civil war

PRETORIA (AFP) — Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir began talks here Tuesday with President Nelson Mandela to discuss the civil war in his country, officials said.

The two leaders went into talks, to be followed by a working lunch, attended by a special envoy of Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad, Tan Sri Ahmad Kamil Jaafar.

South African diplomats said Monday that Malaysia had recently launched a peace initiative for Sudan, where primarily Christian and Animist rebels in the south have been battling domination by the Arabised, Muslim north since 1983.

The conflict, which has cost an estimated one million lives, is already the subject of a regional peace initiative backed by Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea under the aegis of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD).

Malaysian envoys have met with Khartoum government officials as well as rebel leader John Garang, head of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

Diplomats said that a Sudanese rebel delegation early this month went to Malaysia after a stop in South Africa where they had contacts with government officials.

Sudanese Foreign Minister Ali Osman Mohammad Taha said Sunday that Gen. Bashir would ask Mr. Mandela to act as mediator in the conflict.

But Mr. Mandela's spokesman Parks Mankahlana said Monday: "It would be premature to suggest that he would mediate. He still wants to appraise himself of the situation."

The president, he added, would take his cue from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations if he was to have a role in the peace moves.

Foreign ministry spokesman Pieter Swanepoel said after a meeting between Mr. Taha and his South African counterpart Alfred Nzo early Tuesday that the presidents' talks would also address "bilateral relations to see what possible assistance South Africa can offer to

Sudan." Gen. Bashir, who arrived in South Africa Monday for a two-day visit, is accompanied by his foreign and federal affairs ministers, Ali Osman Mohammad Taha and Ali Mohammad Elbag.

The foreign ministry said in a statement Monday that South African authorities "fully support and encourage all parties to the conflict in Sudan to participate in the IGAD peace initiative."

IGAD, which also includes Somalia, Sudan and Djibouti, succeeded at a summit last month in Nairobi in persuading Gen. Bashir to accept a declaration of principles for further peace negotiations.

The Sudanese strongman recently signed a peace accord with six rebel factions, but the SPLA stayed resolutely outside the deal.

In February, Mandela revealed that he had met with SPLA leader Garang in December and announced an imminent meeting with Gen. Bashir.

But the crisis in the former Zaire and trips to Asia forced the South African president to postpone the meeting, diplomats said.



CHALLENGING THE INSECT: A boy plays at a tug-of-war with a robot beetle at the Greatest Insect Exposition in Osaka Tuesday. A month-long exposition started July 27 to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Fabre completing his famous 'Souvenirs entomologiques' (AFP photo)

Hundreds of Iraqi Kurd families return from Iran

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Around 600 Iraqi Kurd families who took refuge in Iran last year have returned home to receive food and medical aid under a U.N. programme, a U.N. official said here Tuesday.

Eric Falt, spokesman for the U.N. coordinator of humanitarian affairs in Iraq, said 400 families have returned over the past few weeks to Erbil and another 200 to Sulaymaniyah, both provinces in northern Iraq.

U.N. agencies have registered the families for them to qualify for food and medical supplies, under the oil-for-food accord between Iraq and the U.N., he said.

Iraq resumed limited oil exports in December, in line with the accord, to finance imports of food and medicine for its sanctions-hit population of more than 20 million.

U.N. sanctions were slapped on Iraq for its August 1990 of Kuwait. The U.N. is in charge of distribution of the humanitarian supplies in the north, which has been under the control of Kurdish groups since the aftermath of the

1991 Gulf war to evict Iraq from Kuwait.

U.N. agencies distribute between 8,000 and 10,000 tonnes of food a week to more than three million people in Iraqi Kurdistan.

An estimated 65,000 Kurds fled across the border to Iran in 1996 to escape fighting between rival Kurdish groups. But most of them have since returned to northern Iraq.

Iranian authorities said at the end of last year that 5,000 Iraqi Kurd refugees at most were left on its territory.

Turkey rules out buying arms from South Africa

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey Tuesday ruled out buying defence equipment from South Africa following press reports Pretoria had blocked the sale of 12 attack helicopters to the Turkish army.

"We have not been buying anything and will not buy any defence equipment from South Africa as long as (South African President) Nelson Mandela does not apologise for refusing to accept the Turkish peace award," a top defence official told Anadolu News Agency (ANA).

"In this connection we have never asked the South African government to sell helicopters to us," added Yalcin Burak, head of Turkey's government agency coordinating defence procurement matters, the undersecretariat for defence industries.

In 1993, the Ankara government awarded the country's annual peace award to Mr. Mandela, but he rejected the offer, accusing Turkey of

widespread human rights violations and mistreatment of the Kurdish question.

The Johannesburg-based Sunday Independent newspaper at the weekend reported Pretoria had blocked the proposed sale by a South African arms maker of Rooivalk attack helicopters to Turkey on human rights and political grounds.

Mr. Burak said Turkey had never agreed to any purchase of helicopters from the South African company Denel, adding: "On the contrary, we have rejected several efforts by Denel to take part in a Turkish helicopter programme." Turkey plans to manufacture locally up to 145 attack helicopters worth nearly \$3 billion under an agreement with a foreign partner yet to be selected.

Mr. Burak's office said the companies bidding for the Turkish deal included the U.S. Sikorsky Aircraft, McDonnell Douglas and Bell Helicopter Textron, the

French-German Eurocopter, the Italian Agusta and the Russian manufacturer Rosvertol.

South Africa imposed a ban on arms exports to Ankara in April 1995 in the wake of a massive incursion by the Turkish army into neighbouring northern Iraq to hunt down separatist Turkish Kurds who had bases in the area.

Turkey in turn placed South Africa on its "red list" of countries which bans all potential arms deals.

Pretoria announced in April that it had lifted the embargo on Turkey.

Commenting on the latest controversy, a South African diplomat in Ankara told Agence France Presse that his country was not enforcing an arms embargo on Turkey.

"Rejecting ... permission to market a specific defence item in one country doesn't mean that this will apply to other items for that country," the diplomat said.

Turkish parliamentary committee approves anti-Islamist education bill

ANKARA (AFP) — A Turkish parliamentary committee Tuesday approved a controversial education reform bill under which hundreds of state-run schools teaching Islam would be closed.

The bill, which has angered the Islamist opposition and provoked demonstrations throughout the country, was prepared by the secular coalition government headed by Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz.

It still has to be approved by parliament's general assembly, in a vote expected before the end of this week.

Parliament's planning and budget committee passed the bill with the votes of three centrist parties in Mr. Yilmaz's government and a left-wing party despite strong opposition by the Islamist-led opposi-

tion, parliament officials said.

Political analysts said the government has the backing of a sufficient number of deputies in the final parliamentary vote, although some far-right members in Mr. Yilmaz's own conservative Motherland Party are opposed to the bill.

The government bill has also caused social unrest.

Former Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, whose pro-Islamist Welfare Party is spearheading efforts to block the move, last week qualified the bill as "a product of a fascist secular understanding challenging the people's will."

Since late July, Islamists have been holding rallies throughout the country to protest the closure of the secondary parts of state-run religious schools training imams, or local Islamic leaders.

Hundreds of protesters have been detained in the demonstrations.

The education bill is staunchly supported by Turkey's powerful pro-secular military, under whose pressure Mr. Erbakan's Islamist-led government stepped down in late June and was replaced by Mr. Yilmaz's cabinet.

Since winning a parliamentary confidence vote a month ago, Mr. Yilmaz has repeatedly vowed that his government would fight rising Islamism in Turkey.

A top Mr. Yilmaz aide Tuesday accused Mr. Erbakan's welfare of "resorting to terrorist methods," referring to the street protests and moves by Islamist deputies to rough up ruling coalition parliamentarians during last week's committee sessions.

The government is planning new taxes to raise \$4.0 billion dollars over the next three years to support the reforms which also aim to increase compulsory primary education from the current five years to eight.

The package, which was also approved by the same parliamentary committee, calls for new taxes on alcohol, tobacco, legal betting and lottery, mobile telephones, car sales and local flights.

The government needs nearly \$6.5 billion to build new schools, train teachers and meet related expenses to implement the reform.

Finance Minister Zekeriya Temizel told the state-owned television station TRT.

The government plans to raise \$4.0 billion through the new taxes, he said.

The tax package should also be approved by parliament's general assembly before taking effect.

Dubai expels 40 AIDS victims on average every month

DUBAI (AFP) — The wealthy Gulf emirate of Dubai expels dozens of foreigners with AIDS each month and puts them on a blacklist to make sure they cannot return, a senior police official said Tuesday.

Captain Hassan Abdullah Hassan of the immigration department said an average of around 40 people a month are tested positive for the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), the precursor of the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). They are expelled immediately.

Blood tests for AIDS are carried out when a new residence visa is being processed or for renewal of visas.

In June, the southern Gulf trade hub deported 36 AIDS sufferers and 179 other expatriates "for involvement in immoral activities and dealing in alcohol," Mr. Hassan said, quoted in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) newspapers.

Dubai, a liberal emirate, is one of the seven-member UAE federation. The same law on AIDS is applied in the rest of the UAE, where an estimated two-thirds of the population of 2.4 million are foreigners.

Other Gulf Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, also expel foreigners who have AIDS.

Tehran Vampire lashed before hanging today

TEHRAN (AP) — An Iranian taxi driver nicknamed the "Tehran Vampire" for stalking, raping and murdering nine female passengers was lashed again Tuesday before he is hanged, the state-run radio said.

A court last week sentenced Ali Reza Khoshruy Kuran Kordiyeh to 214 lashes, life imprisonment and death ten times after he was convicted of carrying on a three-month kidnapping, rape and murder spree earlier this year.

Kordiyeh's whipping began Monday and the 214 lashes must be completed before his scheduled public hanging Wednesday, Judge Hamid Reza Goudarzi was quoted as saying by state-run radio.

It did not say if the lashings have been completed.

The punishment is administered with a thick leather whip made of braided thongs.

The court did not say where the execution will take place, but newspaper reported that Kordiyeh will be hanged from a mobile crane in a public square in western Tehran where he picked up most of his victims.

The Iran News daily reported that relatives of the victims had demanded that Kordiyeh, 28, be stoned to death for his crimes.

Kordiyeh was accused of killing 11 women. But the court found he had murdered nine women and girls between the age of 10 and 47. Two of the victims were a mother and daughter.

The taxi murders became the talk of Tehran, a city where such grisly crimes are rare.

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